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MEMOIRS

OF

WM. COBBETT, ESQ. M.P.

FOR OLDHAM;

AND

THE CELEBRATED AUTHOR OF THE

"POLITICAL REGISTER."

LEEDS:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY A. MANN; AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1835.

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THE

MEMOIRS

OF

WILLIAM COBBETT, ESQUIRE, M.P.

WILLIAM COBBETT, the illustrious subject of this brief memoir, was born on the 9th of March, in the year 1762,* at Farnham,† in Surrey. He could not boast that he was descended from an illustrious family. All that he could boast of in his birth, is that he was born in Old England. With respect to his ancestors, we can go no farther back than his grandfather, indeed nothing is known of them prior to him. He was a day-labourer, and worked for one farmer from the day of his marriage to that of his death, upwards of forty years. He died before Mr.

* Mr. Cobbett never appeared to be certain of the exact time of his birth. His sons, however, inform us that he was born on the 9th of March, 1762, as above, and not in 1766, as the newspapers have it.

† Farnham is the neatest spot in England. All there is a garden. The neat culture of the hop extends its influence to the fields round about. Hedges cut with shears, and every other mark of skill and care strike the eye at the birth-place of our hero.

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Cobbett was born, but he often slept beneath the roof that had sheltered him, and where his widow dwelt for several years after his death. It was a little thatched cottage, with a garden before the door. It had but two windows; a damson-tree shaded one, and a clump of filberts the other. He and his brothers went a visiting here every Christmas and Whitsuntide, and staid a week or two, tormenting the old woman with their continual noise and mischievous tricks. She used to give them bread and milk for breakfast, an apple-pudding for their dinner, and bread and cheese for supper. Her fire was made of turf, cut from the neighbouring heath; and her evening light was a rush dipped in grease. As Mr. Cobbett in his life-time said—How much better is it thus to tell the naked truth than to descend to such miserable shifts as Dr. Franklin had recourse to, in order to persuade people that his forefathers were men of wealth and consideration.

Mr. Cobbett's grandfather was no philosopher. Indeed he was not. "He never made a lightning-rod, nor bottled up a single quart of sunshine, in the whole course of his life. He was no almanack-maker, nor quack, nor chimney-doctor, nor soap-boiler, nor ambassador, nor printer's devil: neither was he a deist; and all his children were born in wedlock." The legacies he left were his scythe, his reap-hook, and his flail; he bequeathed no old and irrecoverable debts to an hospital; he never cheated

the poor during his life, nor mocked them at his death.

His father was a farmer, an honest, industrious, and frugal man, and happy in the possession of a wife of his own rank, who, like himself, was beloved and respected by all. The reader will easily believe, from the poverty of his parents, that he had received no very brilliant education; he was, however, learned for a man in his rank of life. When a little boy, he drove plough for twopence a day; and these, his earnings, were appropriated to the expenses of an evening school. What a village schoolmaster could be expected to teach, he had learnt; and had, besides, considerably improved himself in several branches of the mathematics, he understood land-surveying well, and was often chosen to draw the plans of disputed territory; in short, he had the reputation of possessing experience and understanding, which never fails, in England, to give a man in a country-place, some little weight with his neighbours. So much for his ancestors.

Mr. Cobbett had three brothers: George, Thomas, and Anthony; one of whom was a shop-keeper, the second a farmer, and the youngest in the service of the East India Company.

He went to an old woman who kept a school, but she did not succeed in learning him his alphabet. In the winter evenings, his father taught them all to read and write, and gave them a tolerable knowledge

of arithmetic. Grammar he did not perfectly understand himself, therefore his endeavours to learn them necessarily failed. Their religion was that of the Church of England, to which Mr. Cobbett ever remained attached.* As to politics they were like the rest of the country-people in England—they neither knew nor thought anything about the matter. The shouts of victory or the murmurs of a defeat, would at times break in upon their tranquility for a moment.

After, however, the American war had continued for some time, and the cause and nature of it began

* Much has been said of late, respecting the religious opinions of Mr. Cobbett: his name has been coupled with those of the most notorious atheists: many good christians have abhorred the very mention of his name on this account. Now Mr. Cobbett was a Churchman from the day of his birth to that of his death. He has left us sufficient proofs to destroy all such erroneous impressions as that he was an unbeliever.

He taught his children the Christian precepts not only by word-of mouth, but by example. And in what portion of his voluminous productions can there be found a single immoral, unchristian expression? He was as versant with the Scriptures as, perhaps, many preachers—and he quoted them as often. However, to allay the fears of his admirers, we shall here insert his BELIEF, from a *Register* published by him on the 23d of October, 1813.

"In a few words the Christian System is this:—That the Maker of all things, having, many thousands of years back, created a Man and a Woman, and placed them in a very delightful garden, told them, that they might eat of all the fruits thereof except the fruits of one particular tree; that the Woman was tempted by the Devil to taste that forbidden fruit;

to be understood by the lower classes of the people of England, they became a little better acquainted with subjects of this kind. His father was a partizan of the Americans, and used frequently to dispute on the subject with the gardener of a nobleman who lived near them. This was generally done with good

that she tempted her husband to do the same; that God thereupon drove them out of the garden; that they and all their posterity did, by that act, justly incur the penalty of being burnt in fire to all eternity; that God, in his infinite mercy, found out a way of satisfying his justice without enforcing this tremendous penalty; that he found one, who offered up his life as an atonement; that this was his own Son, who alone could be a sufficient sacrifice; that, in order to effectuate this purpose, a Virgin, viz. the blessed Mary, was chosen as the means of bringing the Son of God into the world; that the Holy Ghost was employed in the work of impregnation; that that Mary who was still a virgin, was with child, in consequence of this divine intercourse; that Joseph, who was now become the husband of Mary, and who, for some cause not stated, had had no consummation with her, perceiving her with child, was minded to put her away; that the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and assured him that his wife was still worthy of his love and esteem, for that her pregnancy arose not from any connection with man, but from the cause, stated above; that, in due time, Mary was delivered; that Jesus Christ was the issue; that he, the Son of God, was put to death by the Jews at Jerusalem; that his life was accepted by his Father, as an atonement for the sins of the world in which he had been murdered.—This is the Christian system; and this the Unitarians deny. They deny openly, that Christ was any thing more than *a mere man*. The author of Ecce Homo, (a work published about this time, in London, and purporting to be a *true* history of Jesus Christ, and of the Christian religion) is profane enough to say, that he was the son of some *soldier*, and is

humour, over a pot of their best ale; yet the disputants sometimes grew warm, and gave way to language that could not fail to attract the attention of his sons. Their father was worsted, without doubt, as he had for his antagonist, a shrewd and sensible old Scotchman,

pleased to be jocular upon the manner in which Joseph was satisfied of his wife's innocence. I greatly blame this levity of expression; and, as a churchman, hold the opinion in abhorrence; but, in real substance, what *difference* is there between this writer and the Unitarian Preachers? If Christ was *not* the Son of God, what is it to us whose son he was? If he was *a mere man*, he might as well be the son of a *soldier* as of any body else.—The Jews, who have the traditionary impudence to say that our blessed Saviour was an artful impostor do not go an inch beyond the Unitarians. The latter say, indeed, that he was a very good man; but, they deny all about his *origin*; they make him the son of a *Carpenter*, and, if that had been the fact, as it was not, he would have been an impostor and his Apostles, who wrote the Gospels, most impudent liars.—The author of Ecce Homo has, at any rate, the merit of being consistent. He denies miracles, resurrection and all; whereas the Unitarians, joining the utmost degree of absurdity with the utmost degree of profanity, deny all that St. Matthew says, all that he so explicitly records, about the impregnation of Mary, while they choose to believe, and to send others to the devil for not believing, that thousands were fed upon a little fish or two and three or four barley loaves, and that the crumbs filled several baskets. They will not believe in the mystery of the Holy incarnation; and yet they will believe in this miracle of the loaves and fishes.—They tell you with as much positiveness as the author of Ecce Homo, that it is *inconceivable* that God should have recourse to such means; that the maker of the world should, through any instrumentality, have intercourse with a woman; that, even supposing this to have been the case, it is *inconceivable* how the Son could be God himself; and that, if he was God himself, it is *inconceivable* how the world should

far his superior in political knowledge; but he pleaded before a partial audience; they thought there was but one wise man in the world, and that that one was their father.

Our hero's first occupation was driving the small birds from the turnip seed, and the cocks from the pease. When he first trudged a field, with his wooden bottle, and his satchel swung over his shoulder, he was hardly able to climb the gates and stiles; and, at

have existed while God was dead upon the cross, and they pretend to be horrified at the idea of the creatures' killing the creator; their whipping him, mocking him, and hanging him up betwixt a couple of thieves.—Oh, the modest gentlemen! It is *inconceivable* is it, and is it any *more inconceivable* than the *miracles* and the *resurrection?* Yet, in these they profess to believe!—Why, these are all *mysteries.* As mysteries they are given to us by our Church; and as mysteries we must receive them. We cannot *conceive* how they could be; but, as the Major of Artillery very shrewdly observes, that is an argument in support of their divine origin rather than otherwise, because it shews that they are above our mundane comprehension.—They ask us Trinitarians, *why* he could not have saved men from everlasting flames without first letting man add the murder of himself to all the rest of their sins; *why* he did not come at once and assume the form of man without the tedious process of incarnation, pregnancy, delivery, and growing up to manhood? In answer, we might ask them, *why* a chicken came out of an egg instead of being born as puppies are; *why* trees do not have their fruit at once and ripe too, without going through the process of budding and blooming; *why* they themselves, the Unitarians and Mr. Ecce Homo, were not made without the aid of mothers; and, indeed *why* they were made *at all;* it being to most people, I believe, quite *inconceivable* what use they can be of in this world."

the close of the day, to reach home was a task of infinite difficulty. His next employment was weeding wheat, and leading a single horse at harrowing barley; hoeing pease followed; then he joined the reapers at harvest, driving the team, and holding the plough. And his father used to boast, that he had four boys, the eldest of whom was but fifteen years old, who did as much work as any three men in the parish of Farnham.

At eleven years of age, he was employed in the gardens belonging to the Bishop of Winchester, at the castle of Farnham, his native town, to clipp box-edging and to weed beds of flowers. He was a great admirer of beautiful gardens. An old gardener, who had been at the King's Gardens at Kew, gave him such a description of them, as induced him instantly to resolve to obtain employment there. The next morning, without saying a word to any one, off he set, with only the clothes upon his back, and thirteen halfpence in his pocket. He found that he must proceed to Richmond, where he arrived after a long day's march, enquiring his way as he best could. On his way he had spent threepence in two pennyworth of bread and cheese, and a pennyworth of small beer; besides which, he had somehow or other, very unfortunately lost a halfpenny on the road; so that he had only threepence left. With this world-beginning fortune, he was trudging, country-lad like, through Richmond, attired

in his fine robes, consisting of a blue smock frock, an excellent pair of strong, but genteel clogs, and red garters tied under his knees. Thus he went staring about him, when, perhaps fortunately, he cast his eye upon a little book, in a bookseller's window, on the outside of which was written :—"TALE OF A TUB; Price 3d." This very odd title excited his curiosity. He certainly had the means to purchase it—he had the threepence, but if spent this way he could have no supper. His curiosity, however, proved stronger than his appetite. In he went and bought the book, which he was so impatient to read, that he got into a field, at the upper corner of Kew Gardens, where stood a stack of hay. On the shady side of this stack he sat down to read. The book was so different from anything that he had ever read before; it was something so new to him, that, though he could not at all understand some part of it, yet it delighted him beyond measure; and produced what he always considered a sort of new birth of intellect. He read on till it was dark, without any thought of supper or bed. When he could see no longer, he put his book, the first he ever purchased, into his pocket, and laid down by the side of the stack, where he slept till the birds in Kew gardens awoke him in the morning; when off he started to Kew, reading his little book as he walked. The singularity of his dress, the simplicity of his manner, his confident and lively air, and, doubtless, his own compassion besides, induced the gardener,

who was a Scotchman, to give him victuals, find him lodging, and set him to work. During the period that he was at Kew, George the Third and two of his brothers, laughed at the oddness of his dress, while he was sweeping the grass plat round the foot of the Pagoda. The gardener, observing that he was fond of books, lent him some on gardening; but these were not relished by him, after the delicious treat afforded him by the Dean of St. Patrick, which he carried with him wherever he went, but which he unfortunately lost, when he was about twenty years of age, in a box that fell overboard in the bay of Funday, in North America; the loss of this little book gave him more pain, than he ever after felt at losing thousands of pounds. This circumstance, trifling as it may seem, always endeared the recollection of Kew to him. It was thus this most powerful and original writer since the days of Defoe and Demosthenes, commenced his useful and splendid career.

After this time, he never cost his parents a farthing in expence; he was a most dutiful son, never having, in his whole life, wilfully or deliberately disobeyed his father or mother. He treasured in his mind their precepts against drinking and gaming; he was never drunk; nor did he ever gamble in his life. When in the army he was often tempted to take up cards. But the cautions of his father always recurred to his mind, and rescued him from peril. Exposed, as the army generally is, to temptations, and the object

of this notice, young, strong, adventurous, uncommonly gay, and greatly given to talk, yet, never in his perilous career was he brought before a magistrate. And notwithstanding the multitude, and endless variety of affairs in which he was engaged, about five oaths were all he had ever taken.

After leaving Kew Gardens, he went on a visit to a relation living in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth. From the top of Portsdown, he, for the first time, beheld the sea, and wished to be a sailor. The grand fleet was riding at Anchor at Spithead. He had heard of the Wooden Walls of Old England; he had formed his ideas of a ship and of a fleet; but what he now beheld so far surpassed what he had ever been able to form a conception of that he stood lost between astonishment and admiration. He had heard talk of the glorious deeds of our admirals and sailors, of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and of all those memorable combats, that good and true Englishmen never fail to relate to their children many times a year. The brave Rodney's victories over the French and Spaniards had oft been the theme of their conversation. The sight of this fleet brought all these into his mind, in confused order, but with irresistible force. His heart was inflated with national pride. The sailors were his countrymen; the fleet belonged to his country; of course he claimed part in it, and in all its honours; yet these honours he had not earned; he reproached himself for

possessing what he had no right to, and resolved to have a just claim, by sharing in the hardships and dangers.

Late in the evening he arrived at his uncle's with his mind full of the sea-faring project. Though he was much wearied, having walked thirty miles, yet he could not close his eyes. It was no sooner day-light, than he arose, and walked to the old castle, on the beach of Spithead. For sixpence given to an invalid, permission was granted him to go upon the battlements, where he had a closer view of the fleet, and at every glance his impatience to be on board increased. In short, he went from the Castle to Portsmouth, got into a boat, and in a few minutes was on board the *Pegasus* man-of-war, and offered himself. But the Captain (Berkeley) a more generous and compassionate man, than is generally met with in his profession, represented to him the toils he must undergo, and the severity of the punishment the least disobedience or neglect would subject him to, persuaded him to return home, and sent him on shore: at length he quitted Portsmouth, but not before an application was made to the Port Admiral Evans, to enrol his name among those who were destined for the service. Somehow or other, the admiral was acquainted with what had passed on board the *Pegasus*, consequently, the request was refused, and he happily escaped, though much against his will, from the most toilsome and perilous profession in the world.

He once more returned to the plough, but was spoiled for a farmer; he longed for a sight of the world; and those things in which he formerly delighted were neglected; the singing of the birds grew insipid; and even the heart-cheering cry of the hounds, which he formerly delighted to follow, leaving his work, bouncing o'er fields, and dashing through brakes and coppices, was heard with the most torpid indifference. He remained at home till the following spring; when on the 6th of May, 1783, he sallied forth to seek adventures. He accompanied two or three females to Guilford-fair, and had to meet them at a house two or three miles from home; in the way he had to cross the London turnpike road. The stage coach had just turned the summit of a hill. At this moment he determined to go to London, mounted the Coach, and arrived there the same evening.

It was by mere accident that he had money enough to defray the expences of the day. Being rigged out for the fair, he had three or four crown and half crown pieces (which most certainly he had not intended to have spent) besides a few shillings and half-pence. This his little all, which had taken years to amass together, melted away, like snow before the sun, when touched by the fingers of the inn-keepers and waiters. In short, on his arrival at Ludgate Hill, he had only about half a crown in his pocket.

By a commencement of that good luck, by which he

was attended through all the situations in which fortune had placed him, he was preserved from ruin. A gentleman who had been one of the passengers, fell into conversation with him at dinner. This gentleman was a hop-merchant, in the borough of Southwark; and it appeared, had often dealt with his father. This gentleman's house became his home, and in the meantime, information was forwarded to his parents. Mr. Cobbett would willingly have returned home according to his father's wish, but pride would not suffer him to do it. He feared the scoffs of his acquaintances more than the real evils which threatened him.

His generous preserver, finding that his obstinancy could not be overcome began to look out for some suitable employment for him. Just as he was preparing an advertisement for the newspaper, an acquaintance of his, an attorney called in. Mr. Cobbett's adventure was related to this gentleman, whose name was Holland; happening to want an understrapping quill-driver, our hero was engaged; and the next day he was perched upon a great high stool, in an obscure chamber in Gray's Inn, endeavouring to decipher the crabbed draughts of his employer.

Mr. Cobbett could write a good plain hand, but could not read the pot-hooks and hangers of Mr. Holland. It was a month before he had learnt to copy, and even then he wrote a snail's pace, for the want of a knowledge of orthography gave him infinite trouble; so

that for the first two months he was a dead-weight upon his hands. Time, however, rendered usefulness visible; and Mr. Holland was pleased to say that he was well satisfied with him, just at the very moment when Mr Cobbett began to grow extremely dissatisfied with his employer.

The following is his own account of this part of his life. It is characteristic and amusing:—"No part of my life was wholly unattended with pleasure, except the eight or nine months I passed in Gray's Inn. The office (for so the dungeon where I wrote was called) was so dark, that on cloudy days we were obliged to burn candles. I worked like a galley-slave from five in the morning till eight or nine at night, and sometimes all night long. How many quarrels have I assisted to foment and perpetuate between those poor innocent fellows, John Doe and Richard Roe! How many times (God forgive me!) have I set them to assault each other with guns, swords, staves, and pitchforks, and then brought them to answer for their misdeeds before our Sovereign Lord the King, seated in his Court of Westminster! When I think of the *saids* and *so-forths*, and the counts of tautology that I scribbled over; when I think of those sheets of seventy-two words, and those lines two inches a-part, my brain turns—Gracious heaven! if I am doomed to be wretched, bury me beneath Iceland snows, and let me feed on blubber; stretch me under the burning line, and deny me thy propitious

dews ; nay, if it be thy will, suffocate me with the infected and pestilential air of a democratic club-room : but save me from the desk of an attorney !

" Mr. Holland was but little in the chambers himself. He always went out to dinner, while I was left to be provided for by the *laundress,* as he called her. Those gentlemen of the law, who have resided in the Inns of Court in London, know very well what a *laundress* means. Our's was, I believe, the oldest and ugliest of the sisterhood. She had age and experience enough to be Lady Abbess of all the nuns in all the convents in Irishtown. It would be wronging the Witch of Endor to compare her to this hag, who was the only creature who deigned to enter into conversation with me. All except the name, I was in prison, and this weird sister was my keeper. Our chambers were, to me, what the subterranean cavern was to Gil Blas ; his description of the dame Leonarda exactly suited my laundress ; nor were the professions, or rather the practice, of our masters altogether dissimilar.

I never quitted this gloomy recess, except on Sundays, when I usually took a walk to St. James's Park, to feast my eyes with the trees, the grass, and the water. In one of these walks, I happened to fix my eyes on an advertisement, inviting all loyal young men, who had a mind to gain riches and glory, to repair to a certain rendezvous, where they might enter into his Majesty's marine service, and have the peculiar happiness

and honour of being enrolled in the Chatham division. I was not ignorant enough to be the dupe of this morsel of military bombast; but a change was what I wanted; besides, I knew that marines went to sea, and my desire to be on that element had rather increased than diminished by my being penned up in London. In short, I resolved to join this glorious corps; and to avoid all possibility of being discovered by my friends, I went down to Chatham, and enlisted into the marines, as I thought; but the next morning I found myself before a captain of a marching regiment. There was no retreating; I had taken a shilling to drink his Majesty's health, and his further bounty was ready for my reception.

"When I told the Captain (who was an Irishman, and who has since been an excellent friend to me), that I thought myself engaged in the marines: "By Jasus! my lad," said he, "and you have had a narrow escape." He told me, that the regiment into which I had been so happy as to enlist was one of the oldest and boldest in the whole army, and that it was at that moment serving in that fine, flourishing, and plentiful country, Nova Scotia! He dwelt long on the beauties and riches of this terrestrial paradise, and dismissed me perfectly enchanted with the prospect of a voyage thither.

"I enlisted early in 1784; and as peace had then taken place, no great haste was made to send recruits

off to their regiments. I remained upwards of a year at Chatham, during which time I was employed in learning my exercise, and taking my turn in the duty of the garrison. My leisure time, which was a very considerable portion of the twenty-four hours, was spent, not in the dissipations common to such a way of life, but in reading and study. In the course of this year I learnt much more than I had ever done before. I subscribed to a circulating library at Brompton, the greatest part of the books in which I read more than once over. The library was not very considerable it is true; nor in my reading was I directed by any degree of taste or choice. Novels, plays, history, poetry, all were read, and nearly with equal avidity.

"Such a course of reading could be attended with very little profit; it was skimming over the surface of every thing. One branch of learning, however, I went to the bottom with, and that the most essential branch too—the grammar of my mother tongue. I had experienced the want of a knowledge of grammar during my stay with Mr. Holland: but it is very probable that I never should have thought of encountering the study of it, had not accident placed me under a man whose friendship extended beyond his interest. Writing a fair hand procured me the honor of being copyist to General Debeig, the commandant of the garrison. I transcribed the famous correspondence between him and the Duke of Richmond, which

ended in the good and gallant old colonel being stripped of the reward bestowed on him for his long and meritorious servitude.

"Being totally ignorant of the rules of grammar, I necessarily made many mistakes in copying, because no one can copy letter by letter, nor even word by word. The Colonel saw my deficiency, and strongly recommended study. He enforced his advice with a sort of injunction, and with a promise of reward in case of success.

"I procured me a Lowth's Grammar, and applied myself to the study of it with unceasing assiduity, and not without some profit: for though it was a considerable time before I fully comprehended all that I read, still I read and studied with such unremitted attention, that at last I could write without falling into any very gross errors. The pains I took cannot be described: I wrote the whole grammar out two or three times; I got it by heart; I repeated it every evening; and when on guard, I imposed on myself the task of saying it all over once every time I was posted sentinel. To this exercise of my memory I ascribe the retentiveness of which I have since found it capable; and to the success with which it was attended I ascribe the perseverance that has led to the acquirement of the little learning of which I am master.

"This study was, too, attended with another ad-

vantage: it kept me out of mischief. I was always sober, and regular in my attendance; and, not being a clumsy fellow, I met with none of those reproofs, which disgust so many young men with the service."

While at his studies, Mr. Cobbett received much annoyance from the soldiers in the barracks. Besides which, he had many difficulties to contend against. He says—"I learned grammar when I was a private soldier on the pay of sixpence a day. The edge of my berth, or that of my guard bed, was my seat to study in; my knapsack was my book-case; a bit of board, lying on my lap was my writing table; and the task did not demand any thing like a year of my life. I had no money to purchase candle or oil; in winter time it was rarely that I could get any evening-light but that of the fire, and only my turn even of that.**** To buy a pen or a sheet of paper, I was compelled to forego some portion of food, though in a state of half-starvation; I had not a moment of time that I could call my own; and I had to read and to write amidst the talking, laughing, singing, whistling, and brawling of at least half a score of the most thoughtless of men, and that, too, in the hours of their freedom from all controul. Think not lightly of the *farthing* that I had to give, now and then, for ink, pen, or paper! That farthing was, alas! a great sum to me! I was as tall as I am now; I had great health and great exercise. The whole of the money, not

expended for us at market, was *twopence* a week for each man. I remember, and well I may, that upon one occasion, I, after all absolutely necessary expences, had, on Friday, made shift to save a halfpenny in reserve, which I had destined for the purchase of a red-herring in the morning; but when I pulled off my clothes, at night, so hungry then as to be hardly able to endure life, I found that I had lost my half-penny! I buried my head under the miserable sheet and rug, and cried like a child!"

There is no situation where merit is so sure to meet with reward as in a well-disciplined army. Those who command are obliged to reward it for their own ease and credit. Mr. Cobbett was soon raised to the rank of corporal, which brought him in twopence *per diem*, besides putting a very clever worsted knot upon his shoulders, which he thought was a distinction not to be laughed at.

As promotion began to dawn, he grew impatient to get to his regiment, where he expected soon to bask under the rays of royal favour. He at length sailed for Nova Scotia, where he arrived, after a short and pleasant passage, and remained till the month of September, 1791. When he first beheld the barren, not to say hideous rocks at the entrance of the harbour, he began to fear that the master of the vessel had mistaken his way; for he could perceive nothing of that fertility that his good recruiting captain had dwelt on with so much delight.

Nova Scotia had no other charm for him than that of novelty. Every thing he saw was new: bogs, rocks, and stumps, musquitoes and bull frogs; thousands of captains and colonels without soldiers, and of 'squires without stockings or shoes. In England he had never thought of approaching a 'squire without a most respectful bow; but in this new world, though he was but a corporal, he often ordered a 'squire to bring him a glass of grog, and even to take care of his knapsack.

While his regiment was abroad, he received the public and official thanks of the Governor of the Province for his zeal in the King's service; an honour which no other officer in the regiment received.*

During this period of service, that is, from the age of sixteen to twenty-five, he was never once accused of a fault of any kind. At the age of nineteen, he was promoted from a corporal to the rank of serjeant-major over the heads of nearly fifty others.

The regiment arrived at Portsmouth, on the 3d of November, 1791, and on the 19th of the same month, he obtained, at his own request, his discharge, by two highly testimonials, from Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Lieutenant General Frederick—after having served not quite eight years, and after having, in that

* Many years after this, the same governor (General Carleton) came to see him, and to claim the pleasure of his acquaintance.

short space, passed through every rank, from that of private to that of sergeant-major, without being disgraced, confined, or even reprimanded.

The following testimonial will exhibit the nature of his discharge:—

"By the Right Hon. Lord EDWARD FITZGERALD, commanding the 54th Regiment, of which Lieutenant-General FREDERICK is Colonel—

"These are to certify, that the bearer hereof, WILLIAM COBBETT, Sergeant-Major in the aforesaid regiment, has served honestly and faithfully for the space of eight years, nearly seven of which he has been a non-commissioned officer, and of that time he has been five years Sergeant-Major to the regiment; but, having very earnestly applied for his discharge, he in consideration of his good behaviour, and the services he has rendered the regiment, is hereby discharged. Given under my hand and the seal of the regiment, at Portsmouth, this 29th day of December, 1791. EDWARD FITZGERALD."

We shall now add the orders issued in the garrison of Portsmouth, on the day of his discharge:—

"*Portsmouth, 19th Dec.* 1791.

"Sergeant-Major COBBETT having most pressingly applied for his discharge, at Major Lord EDWARD FITZGERALD's request, Gen. FREDERICK has granted it. General FREDERICK has ordered Major Lord

EDWARD FITZGERALD to return the Sergeant-Major thanks for his behaviour and conduct during the time of his being in the regiment; and Major Lord EDWARD adds his most hearty thanks to those of the General."

These highly honourable testimonials of his behaviour in the regiment, will have the tendency, it is hoped, to destroy those flagitious assertions which have but too often received credence.*

During that part of his life he spent in the army he had lived amongst, and was compelled to associate with, the most beastly of drunkards, where liquor was so cheap, that a soldier might be drunk every day; yet he never, during the whole time, tasted liquor. His father's, and more especially his mother's precepts were always at hand to protect him. His early rising—his cleanliness—good behaviour—exactness—and superior intellect, (acquired by unweared exertions) not only won him the favour of his officers, but also the good-will of the soldiers, above whose heads he had been so extraordinarily promoted. Another quotation from his own writings will present to us a striking illustration of his general character; in speaking of himself in the army, he says:—"I was always ready; if I had to mount guard at *ten*, I was ready at *nine*, never did any man or any thing, wait one moment for me. Being at an age under twenty years,

* It has been asserted more than once, that he was flogged in his regiment for thieving, and afterwards deserting.

raised from corporal to sergeant-major at once, over the heads of thirty sergeants, I naturally should have been an object of envy and hatred; but this habit of early rising, and of rigid adherence to the precepts which I have given you, really subdued these passions; because every one felt, that what I did he had never done, and never could do. Before my promotion, a clerk was wanted to make out the morning report of the regiment. I rendered the clerk unnecessary; and, long before any other man was dressed for the parade, my work for the morning was all done, and I myself was on the parade, walking, in fine weather, for an hour perhaps. My custom was this: to get up in summer, at day-light, and in winter at four o'clock; shave, dress, even to the putting of my sword-belt over my shoulders; and having my sword lying on the table before me, ready to hang by my side. Then I ate a bit of cheese, or pork, and bread. Then I prepared my report, which was filled up as fast as the companies brought me in the materials. After this, I had an hour or two to read, before the time came for any duty out of doors, unless, when the regiment, or part of it went out to exercise in the morning. When this was the case, and the matter was left to me, I always had it on the ground in such time as that the bayonets glistened in the rising sun, a scene which gave me delight, of which I often think, but which

I should in vain endeavour to describe. If the officers were to go out, eight or ten o'clock was the hour, sweating the men in the heat of the day, breaking in upon the time for cooking their dinner, putting all things out of order, and all men out of humour. When I was commander, the men had a long day of leisure before them: they could ramble into the town or into the woods; go to get raspberries, to catch birds, to catch fish, or to pursue any other recreation, and such of them as chose, and were qualified, to work at their trades." So that here arising solely from the early habits of one very young man, were pleasant and happy days given to hundreds. In speaking of the benefits derivable from early rising and assiduity, he says:—"The adjutant, under whom it was my duty to act, when I was a sergeant-major, was, as almost all military officers are, or, at least, were, a very illiterate man, perceiving that every sentence of mine was in the same form and manner as sentences in print, became shy of letting me see pieces of his writing. The writing of orders, and other things, therefore, fell to me; and, thus, though no nominal addition was made to my pay, and no nominal addition to my authority, I acquired the latter as effectually as if a law had been passed to confer it upon me." Every moment of the life of Mr. Cobbett was spent to advantage—and his whole career has been that of unremitting industry and perseverance, such as few men

are capable of. While in the army, in Nova Scotia, a British province of North America, and which, until 1784, included the province of New Brunswick, he first saw his future wife; she was then thirteen years of age, and he was twenty-one. She was the daughter of a Sergeant of Artillery, and he was the Sergeant-Major of a regiment of foot, both stationed in forts near the city of St. John, in New Brunswick. He sat in the same room with her for about an hour, in company with others, and he made up his mind, with his usual promptitude, that she was the girl for him. He describes this interesting part of his life in his advice "To a Lover;" and as it will be neither tedious, nor uninteresting we shall introduce it in this brief memoir:—"That I thought her beautiful is certain, for that I always said should be an indispensable qualification; but I saw in her what I deemed marks of that sobriety of conduct of which I have said so much, and which has been by far the greatest blessing of my life. It was now dead of winter, and of course, the snow several feet deep on the ground, and the weather piercing cold. It was my habit when I had done my morning's writing to go out at break of day, to take a walk on a hill at the foot of which our barracks lay. In about three mornings after I had first seen her, I had, by an invitation, to breakfast with me, got up two young men, to join me in my walk; and our road lay by the house of her father and mother.

It was hardly light, but she was out on the snow, scrubbing out a washing-tub. "That's the girl for me," said I, when we had got out of her hearing. One of these young men came to England soon afterwards; and keeps an inn in Yorkshire, he came to Preston, at the time of the election, to verify whether I was the same man. When he found that I was, he appeared surprised; but what was his surprise, when I told him, that those tall young men, whom he saw around me, were the sons of that pretty girl that he and I saw scrubbing out the washing-tub on the snow in New Brunswick at day-break in the morning.

"From the day that I first spoke to her, I never had a thought of her being the wife of any other man, more than I had a thought of her being transformed into a chest of drawers; and I formed my resolution at once, to marry her as soon as we could get permission, and to get out of the army as soon as I could. So that this matter was, at once, settled as firmly as if written in the book of fate. At the end of about six months, my regiment, and I along with it, were removed to Frederickton,* a distance of a hundred miles, up the river of St. John; and, which was worse, the artillery was expected to go off to England a year or two before our regiment! The artillery went, and she along with them; and now it was that I acted a

* Or Fredericktown, which is the capital of New Brunswick.

part becoming a real and sensible lover. I was aware, that, when she got to that gay place, Woolwich, the house of her father and mother, necessarily visited by numerous persons not the most select, might become unpleasant to her, and I did not like besides, that she should continue to work hard. I had saved a *hundred and fifty guineas,* the earnings of my early hours, in writing for the pay-master, the quarter-master and others, in addition to the savings of my own pay. *I sent her all my money before she sailed;* and wrote to her to beg of her, if she found her home uncomfortable, to hire a lodging with respectable people; and, at any rate, not to spare the money, by any means; but to buy herself good clothes, and to live without hard work, until I arrived in England; and I, in order to induce her to lay out the money, told her that I should get plenty more before I came home.

"As the malignity of the devil would have it, we were kept abroad two years longer than our time, Mr. PITT (England not being so tame then as she is now) having knocked up a dust with Spain about Nootka Sound. Oh, how I cursed Nootka Sound, and poor bawling Pitt too, I am afraid! At the end of four years, however, home I came; landed at Portsmouth, and got my discharge from the army by the great kindness of poor Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who was then the Major of my regiment. I found my

little girl a servant of all work (and hard work it was), at *five pounds* a year, in the house of a Captain Brisac; and without hardly saying a word about the matter, she put into my hands, the whole of *my hundred and fifty guineas unbroken!*" What effect this must have produced on his feelings! Admiration of her conduct, and self-gratulation on this indubitable proof of the soundness of his own judgment were now added to his love of her beautiful person. He would not say that there are not many young women of this country who would, under similar circumstances, have acted as his wife did in this case; on the contrary, he hoped, and sincerely believed, that there was. But when her age is considered; when we reflect that she was living in a place crowded, literally crowded, with gaily-dressed and handsome young men, many of whom were far richer and in higher rank than himself, and many of them ready to offer her marriage; when we recollect that she was living amongst young women who put upon their backs every shilling that they earned; when we see her keeping the bag of gold untouched, and working hard to provide herself with but mere necessary apparel, and doing this while she was passing from fourteen to eighteen years of age; when we view the whole of the circumstances, we must say that this is an example, which, while it reflects honour on her sex, ought to have a corresponding influence upon every female who may become acquainted with this splendid example of economy, and industry.

On the return of the regiment to England, he demanded a court-martial upon some of the officers; but the tricks and manœuvres resorted to, and the impediments to the course of a fair enquiry so disgusted him, that he did not await the issue; but, in March, 1792, left England for France, where he staid till the beginning of September following, comprising six of the happiest months of his life. He went to that country full of prejudices against the French and their religion; but a few weeks convinced him that he had been deceived with respect to both. He met every where with civility and even hospitality, in a degree that he had never been accustomed to. The people amongst whom he lived, with few exceptions, were honest, pious, and kind to excess. It was his intention to stay in France till the spring of 1793, as well to perfect himself in the French language, as to pass the winter at Paris. But, perceiving the storm gathering, and that a war with England was inevitable, he resolved to leave that country. Having, however, a great desire to see Paris, he hired a coach to proceed thither; and was on his way, when he heard at Abbeville that the king was dethroned, and his guards murdered. This intelligence made him turn off towards Havre-de-Grace, whence he embarked for the United States of America, where he maintained himself for some time by teaching English to Frenchmen. It was about this time, in and near Philadelphia, that he began his young marriage days. Owing to the heat of the weather, being in the

middle of the burning-hot month of July, his wife had become very ill—and consequently, got little rest. Mr. Cobbett was much afraid of fatal consequences to his wife for want of sleep. All great cities in hot weather are full of dogs, which during the night, keep up a horrible barking, and fighting and howling. Upon this particular occasion, they made a noise so terrible and so unremitted that it was next to impossible that even a person in good health should obtain a minute's sleep. He was, about nine in the evening sitting by the bed:—"I do think," said his wife, "that I could go to sleep *now*, if were not *for the dogs*." Down stairs he went, and sallied out, in his shirt and trowsers, and without shoes or stockings; and going to a heap of stones lying beside the road, set to work upon the dogs, going backward and forward, and keeping them at two or three hundred yards distance from the house. He walked thus the whole night barefooted, lest the noise of his shoes might reach her ears; the bricks on the causeway, were so hot as to be disagreeable to his feet. These exertions produced the desired effect: a sleep of several hours was the consequence; and at eight o'clock in the morning, off he went to a day's business, which was to end at six in the evening. Though he had business to occupy the whole of his time, Sundays and week-days, except sleeping hours; he made time to assist his wife in the taking care of the baby, and in all sorts of things: get up, light her fire, boil her tea-

kettle, carry her up warm water in cold weather, take the child while she dressed herself and got the breakfast ready; then breakfast, get her in water and wood for the day, then dressed himself neatly, and sallied forth to his business. The moment that was over he hastened back again; and no more thought of spending a moment away from her, unless business compelled him, than he thought of quitting the country and going to sea.

The thunder and lightning are tremendous in America, compared with what they are in this country. His wife was, at one time, very much afraid of thunder and lightning; and, as is the feeling of all such women, and, indeed, all men too, she wanted company, and particularly her husband, in those times of danger, though of course he well knew that his presence would not diminish that danger; but, be doing what he might, if within reach of home, he hastened to her, the moment he perceived a thunder storm approaching. Scores of miles has he run on this errand, in the streets of Philadelphia! The Frenchmen, who were his scholars, used to laugh at him exceedingly on this account; and sometimes when making an appointment with them, they would say, with a smile and a bow, "*Sauve la tonnere toujours, Monsieur Cobbett.*"

He never *dangled* about the heels of his wife; very seldom *walked out,* as it is called, with her; he never "went *a walking*" in the whole course of his

life; that is, never without having some object in view other than the walk; and, as he never could walk at a slow pace, it would have been difficult for her to have kept up with him. He detested this "walking out," as it made a person more like a footman than a husband.

In the United States he became a *writer*, though comparatively, he understood very little at that time; the utmost of his ability, however, was exerted on the side of his country; and although he forgave, he could not forget the injustice done to him at the court-martial. Every thing of this sort was forgotten when the honour of his country was concerned. The French or democratic party were fierce in their abuse of his native country and her institutions. With Mr Cobbett this was unbearable. The love of his country was not merely a settled feeling; it partook of the ardour of a passion, which, upon a careful perusal of his works will be found to have continued unabated throughout his long life, and ever influenced, both his pen and tongue. His public career was commenced by publishing a periodical under the assumed name of "Peter Porcupine," which, being written with great force and vivacity, soon excited attention, and were even re-printed in England. The first of these pamphlets was "The Tartuffe detected, or Observations on the emigration of a Martyr to the Cause of Liberty," meaning Dr. Rush, who subsequently prosecuted the author for Libel, and obtained heavy damages.

The French war had just then begun, (1784,) and he was according to his own account twenty-eight years of age. He knew nothing at all of the merits of the French revolution, or of the war in England against it; this, however, did not deter him, from taking up his pen in defence of the character, and what he then deemed the cause of his country. The people of America, still sore from the wounds of their war against England for liberty, were so loud and so enthusiastic in the cause of the French, that the far greater part of the young men hoisted the famous tri-coloured cockade; and every thing seemed to indicate that the government would be forced into a war with England, in aid of the French. He then, by occasional pamphlets, and the periodical noticed above, took the English side. The force of his writings gave them effect; that effect was prodigious; it prevented that which both governments greatly dreaded; and peace between England and America was preserved. His exertions at this time excited considerable hostility against him, and produced unjust and almost ruinous prosecutions; one of which we have already mentioned. The expence of this particular prosecution was generously defrayed by some public-spirited men (chiefly Scotchmen) in Canada, the weight of the rest feel upon himself.

As this was the commencement of a literary career, unexampled, taken in the whole, in the republic of letters, and was, in itself, moreover, of rather a curious

description, we shall give the author's account of it. There was great difficulty, it seems, in obtaining a publisher for this work, in consequence of its unpopular character, and it was not till after the title was altered, by the suppression of the first part of it, that the author could succeed in bringing it before the public. It was then taken by a bookseller; and the result was any thing but satisfactory. We shall insert the author's own story:—

"The terms on which Mr. Bradford took the 'Observations,' were what booksellers call publishing it together. I beg the reader if he foresees the possibility of his becoming author, to recollect this prase well. Publishing it together is thus managed: the bookseller takes the work, prints it, and defrays all expences of paper, binding, &c.; and the profits, if any, are divided between him and the author. Long after the 'Observation's' were sold off, Mr. Bradford rendered me an acccunt (undoubtedly a very just one) of the sales. According to this account, my share of the profits (my share only) amounted to the sum of one shilling and sevenpence half-penny currency of the state of Pennsylvania (or, about eleven-pence three farthings sterling,) quite clear of all deductions whatsoever!"

What a hopeful beginning for a sanguine writer, who had committed himself to the championship of a great cause, and who had made choice of literature as a profession for his livelihood! After the *Observations*, however, Mr Cobbett and Mr Bradford "published it together" no longer. The author bargained for each of his subsequent pamphlets, until he became publisher himself, and thus secured both shares.

It must not be supposed that Mr Cobbett escaped

the imputation of having written four interested and sordid notices. In a pamphlet which he published in America, in 1797, he completely vindicated himself against the accusation of having been in the pay of the British government, and demonstrated the purity of his motives, if he did not succeed in evidencing the soundness of his judgment.

In the year 1800, he left Philadelphia, stripped of a fortune, leaving thousands of pounds in small debts, scattered all over that immense country. He did not forget to leave behind him his curses on the corrupt and tyrannical government of Pennsylvania. He left also his blessings on some very kind friends, and those friends Quakers, one of whom, Paul, (after whom he named his own son, James, four years afterwards,) he always cited as an example for all mankind.

He, his wife, and two little children, came home from New York, in the post-office packet, for which he paid very high. Stopping at Halifax, he was very graciously received by the Duke of Kent, then Commander-in-Chief, in the province of Nova Scotia. On his arrival at Falmouth, he was most kindly lodged and entertained by the Collector of the Customs, Mr. Samuel Pellew, Lord Exmouth's brother. For his fame had, even then, spread very widely amongst all persons connected with the government. Arrived in London, (July, 1800,) he took a hired lodging; all the

money he had, amounted to only about £500, the proceeds of the sale of his goods and books at New York.

We must not omit to add, that, while at Philadelphia, making his gallant and most effectual stand against the French influence, Sir Robert Liston, our envoy there, offered Mr. Cobbett, in the presence of Lord Henry Stuart, on the part of our government, great pecuniary reward; this he refused, though it was generally rumoured at the time, that he accepted of it. It was then proposed that provision should be made for any of his relatives in England who might need it; but this he also refused, saying that, they might not be made happier by it; besides, they had rendered no public service, and, therefore, had no right to live on the taxes paid by the labouring people. What is stated here was often repeated in the life-time of Sir Robert Liston, and who, in 1803, when called as a witness on a trial of Mr. Cobbett, for a libel on Lord Hardwicke, stated the substance of the above in the Court of King's Bench, on his oath. It cannot be said that the government did wrong in making this offer; he had merited a reward; his services to England were great and manifest, and had this offer not been made, after his severe losses on account of our country, the government would have been culpable indeed.

There is one important incident which took place at Philadelphia, we must not by any means overlook.

It has been said, and repeatedly too, that Mr. Cobbett was *keen of money.*

So far as we have proceeded, the reverse of this will be the better impression made on all who may read this "Life;" but further to convince that this was not his disposition we shall relate the following fact, which for honour and generosity remains unparalleled. Mr. Cobbett rented a house at more than £300 sterling a year, of Mr. John Olden, of the city mentioned above, who was a very rich man, a Quaker, having a wife, two sons, and a daughter. He was a *free* Quaker, liked to laugh, and delighted to hear Cobbett's "*slap-dash*" conversation. He offered to give him the house. In spite of all that was said he would not accept of it. It was then offered to Mrs. Cobbett, but she also refused. Mr. Olden, died suddenly in 1799; and his eldest son was surprised that Mr. Cobbett did not claim the house, his father having said that no one else should have it. This he did not do. The son, Mr. Olden, is now alive, and receiving the benefit accruing from this property.

On Mr. Cobbett's arrival in London,* all who knew his energetic and powerful exertions in America, supposed as a matter of course, that gold would shower upon him. Many persons will recollect that, in 1803,

* He opened a bookseller's shop in Pall-Mall, with the sign of the Bible, the Crown, and the Mitre.

Mr Wyndham went so far as to say in the House of Commons, that for Mr. Cobbett's services rendered to England, " a statue of gold ought to be erected to him." His health was drunk at Tory dinners throughout the island. His letters on the subject of the *Treaty of Amiens,* produced a great sensation both here and on the continent. Of this production it was said by the celebrated Swiss historian, Muller, that it was more eloquent than anything that had appeared since the days of Demosthenes. Mr. Wyndham, who was then Secretary-at-War, invited Mr. Cobbett to dine at his house, with a party, of whom PITT and CANNING were two. He was of course proud of this invitatitation; and felt more than ever disposed to use his talents in support of " the system," as it was then going on. Indeed it needed support—real support, for Napoleon was making fearful progress.

He established a morning paper under the title of *The Porcupine,* in which he warmly supported Mr. Pitt, who was then at the head of affairs. This paper was soon gone and with it more than all that he possessed in the money way; and if he had not been aided by a private subscription, set on foot by Mr. Wyndham and Dr. Lawrence, it is probable he would have been ruined. He, however, with the kind aid of these individuals, subsequently published the *Register.* Still, treated as he had been, by the government, he gave it all the support in his power as far as related to the war, though he opposed Addington,

who, in 1801, had become Minister. He opposed the *peace of Amiens*, which was nothing but a disgraceful and hollow truce; but when the war began again, and when, in 1803, Napoleon Bonaparte threatened to invade England, which Cobbett was foolish enough to believe was intended, he wrote an article entitled, "*Important Considerations for the People of England.*" This was given to Sir Charles Yorke, then Secretary of State, who caused it to be printed to the extent, it is said, of two millions and upwards; and were sent through the general post-office to all parts of the kingdom, besides being read from almost every pulpit in England. The service thus rendered to the Minister was incalculable—the effect was prodigious. The apology offered for his thus being instrumental in the work of delusion, is, that he was inexperienced—his zeal out-ran his knowledge.

Mr. George Hammond, the under Secretary of State for Foreign affairs, sent for Mr. Cobbett to his office, and made him an offer of a government paper. The government had two, *The True Briton*, and *The Sun*; the former a morning and the latter an evening paper. They were their property, office, types, lease of houses, and all; the former was offered to him as a *gift*, with all belonging to it. His refusal of Sir Robert Liston's offer, convinced them—that to offer money, was of no use. This course, therefore, was resorted to. Mr. Cobbett's answer to Mr. Hammond was conveyed in reminding him of the fable of the

Wolf and the *Mastiff*, the latter of which, having, one night, when loose, rambled into a wood, met the former all gaunt and shagged, and said to him, "'Why do you lead this sort of life? See how fat and sleek I am! Come here with me and live as I do, dividing your time between eating and sleeping.' The ragged friend having accepted the kind offer, they then trotted on together till they got out of the wood, when the wolf, assisted by the light of the moon, the beams of which had been intercepted by the trees, spied a *crease*, a little *mark*, round the neck of the mastiff. 'What is your fancy,' said he, 'for making that mark round your neck?' 'Oh,' said the other, 'it is only the mark of my *collar* that my master ties me up with.' '*Ties you up!*' exclaimed the wolf, stopping short at the same time; 'Give me my ragged hair, my gaunt belly and my *freedom*;' and so saying, he trotted back to the wood." At the same time he was much obliged to Mr. Hammond and the other gentlemen for the offer; but, though he was very poor, his desire was to render the greatest possible service to his country, and, he was convinced, that, by keeping himself wholly free, and relying upon his own means, he should be able to give the government much more efficient support, than if any species of dependence could be traced to him. At the same time, he did not wish to cast blame on those who were thus dependent. Mr. Hammond did not appear at all surprised at his answer, and upon hearing it said to Mr. Cobbett:—"Well, I

must say, that I think you take the honourable course, and I most sincerely wish it may also be the most profitable one."

From that moment all belonging to the government looked on him with suspicion. He, however, established a daily paper of his own, but knowing nothing of such a business, which demanded considerably more money than he was worth—it soon failed; indeed the advertisements of the government which were given even to their opponents, were never, in one single instance given to him.

At the time of his return the great government writers and political agents, were JOHN REEVES; who had been chairman of the *"Loyal Association against Republicans and Levellers;"* JOHN BOWLES; JOHN GIFFORD; WILLIAM GIFFORD; Sir FREDERICK MORTON EDEN, Bart.; the Reverend Mr. IRELAND, the Dean of Westminster; the Reverend JOHN BRAND; the Reverend HERBERT MARSH, now Bishop of Peterborough; MALLET DU PAN; Sir FRANCIS D'IVERNOIS; and NICHOLAS VANSITTART. These were all *pamphlet writers* supporting PITT and the war through thick and thin. They, looking upon Mr. Cobbett as a *fellow-labourer,* had sent all their pamphlets to him at Philadelphia; and all of them, except MARSH, VANSITTART, and the two Frenchmen, had written to him laudatory letters. All but the Parsons called themselves 'SQUIRES, in the title-pages of their pamphlets.

The remainder of this story we shall finish in Cobbett's own interesting language:—"Look at me now: I had been bred up with a smock-frock upon my back; that frock I had exchanged for a soldier's coat; I had been out of England almost the whole of my time, from the age of sixteen; we used to give in those times, the name of 'SQUIRE to none but *gentlemen of great landed estates,* keeping their carriage, hounds, and so forth: look at me then, in whose mind my boyish ideas of a 'SQUIRE had been carried about the world with me: *look at me,* I say, with letters from four *'Squires,* and from *Reverends* on my table; and wonder not that my head was half-turned! Only think of me (who just about twelve years before, was clumping about with nailed shoes on my feet and with a smock-frock on my back) being in *literary correspondence* with four 'SQUIRES, two REVERENDS, and a BARONET! Look at me, and wonder that I did not lose my senses! and, if I had remainded in America, God knows what might have happened.

"Luckily I came to England, and that *steadied* my head pretty quickly. To my utter astonishment and confusion, I found all my SQUIRES and REVERENDS and my BARONET too; all in one way or other, dependents on the Government, and, out of the public purse profiting from their pamphlets. JOHN REEVES, *Esquire,* who was a barrister, but *never practised,* I found joint patentee of the office of King's printer, a sinecure worth to him about £4,000 a year, which he

had got for thirty years, just then begun. JOHN BOWLES, *Esquire*, (also a briefless barrister,) I found a Commissioner of Dutch property. JOHN GIFFORD, *Esquire*, I found a Police Magistrate, with a pension of £300 a year besides. WILLIAM GIFFORD, *Esquire*, I found sharing the profits of Canning's Anti-Jacobin newspaper, (set up and paid for by the Treasury), and with a sinecure of £329 a year besides. My *Baronet* I found with *rent-free apartments*, in Hampton Court Palace. My *Reverend* JOHN BRAND, I found with the living of St. George, Southwark, given him by Lord Loughborough, (then Chancellor), he already having a living in Suffolk. My *Reverend* IRELAND, I found with the living of Croydon, or the expectancy of it, and also found that he was *looking steadily at Lord Liverpool*. The *Reverend* HERBERT MARSH, I found a pension-hunter, and he soon succeeded to the tune of £514 a year. MALLET DU PAN I found *dead*; but I found that he had been a *pensioner*, and I found his widow a *pensioner*, and his son in one of the public offices. Sir FRANCIS D'IVERNOIS, I found an emigrant *pensioner*. And, NICHOLAS VANSITTART, *Esquire*, who had written a pamphlet to prove that the war enriched the nation, I found, O God! a "*Commissioner of Scotch Herrings!*" Hey dear! as the Lancashire men say: I thought it would have broken my heart!"

Of all these *great* and titled writers, Reeves and

Gifford were the only men of talent. Amongst the first things that Reeves said to Cobbett, was:—"I tell you what, Cobbett, we have only two ways *here;* we must either ——— or kick them: and you must make your choice at once." Mr. Cobbett resolved to kick. Of Reeves, Mr. Cobbett always spoke in the kindest manner; he was a really learned lawyer, and, politics aside, as good a man as ever lived. As to the rest of his 'Squires and other dignified pamphleteers, they were a low, talentless, place and pension-hunting crew; he was so disgusted with them, that he trembled at the thought of falling into their ranks. Love of such a life was not in him; the very idea of becoming rich had never entered his mind. The thought of selling his talents for money, and of plundering the country with the help of the means that God had given him wherewith to assist in supporting its character, filled him with horror not to be expressed.

His first desertion of the tory party has been ascribed to a gratuitous insult offered him by Mr. Pitt, who, with a superciliousness that crowded his great qualities, affected so much of aristocratic *morgue* as to decline the introduction of Mr. Wyndham's *protege*. This is the common version of Mr. Cobbett's abandonment of Tory politics. But this was not the case—we are told in some portion of Mr. Cobbett's writings that Mr. Pitt was extremely free and agreeable—and held conversation with him the whole of the time; indeed Mr. Cobbett so admired his politeness and

manners, that he felt more than ever disposed to use his talents in support of "the system" as it was then going on.

It has been asserted too, that when he came home he was *disappointed;* that the government did not receive and reward him agreeably to his desert, and that, therefore he turned against it. At this dinner, besides the brave and honest (though misguided host,) were Mr. Canning, Mr. Frere, Mr. George Ellis, and some others. He was never presumptuous in his life, and he regarded this as a great act of condesension on the part of Mr. Pitt, of whose talents, and integrity he had then the highest possible opinion.

What reception could be more flattering to a man who had been in such humble circumstances as Mr. Cobbett—who, but a few years before had been a private soldier, and, who, even then, had not more than about five hundred pounds in the world? We are well aware that Mr. Pitt never admitted newspaper writers to such an honour. What reason, therefore, was there to be discontented with this reception?

And, as to Government favours, plenty were offered—but none—not a solitary one accepted—he had money offered in America—he had money offered in England, besides a daily paper, together with the types, presses, and lease of the premises—and, no doubt more than ever came to the knowledge of the public—all of which offers were REFUSED! It mat-

tered not how great and considerable, or how trivial and inconsiderable the *favours* of the Government might be; Mr. Cobbett was not the man to be bribed. Had he been to be bought, how *rich* and even how *high* he might have been. But he always refused to take one single penny from government. We shall here relate an occurrence which will show how careful he was to guard his fingers against touching the public money. He had brought home with him a large trunk or two of *old books*. These, when he arrived at Falmouth, the collector, Mr. Pellew, told him he ought not to pay duty for; as they were merely library books and for private use, and not intended *for sale;* but that he could not remit the duty; that the trunks must go round to London; and that a memorial to the Treasury would obtain the books *untaxed*. This he did, and received for answer, that the duty must be paid, but that the *Treasury would give him the amount*. "No, thank ye," said Mr. Cobbett, and he immediately paid the duty.

When he established his newspaper he discovered that to carry it on was not an affair of *talent* but of *trick*. He could not sell paragraphs. He could not throw out hints against a man's or woman's reputation, in order to bring the party forward to pay him for silence. He could not do these mean and infamous things—by which the far greater part of the press in London was at this time supported. After the failure of this paper, he was for a short time without writing

at all; but at the suggestion of Mr. Wyndham, he started a *weekly paper*. Mr. Cobbett had not the means to do this, but Mr. Wyndham, with Dr. Lawrence, advanced him the means. But these advances were made and expended upon the express and written conditions, that he should never be under the influence of any body. The money was to be looked upon as sunk in the risk; and without any sort of obligation to any of the parties. Indeed, never did any one of the persons who advanced the money, attempt, in the slightest degree, to influence his opinions, which were frequently opposed to their own.

When the Whigs came into office again; and when Mr. Wyndham came to fill the high office of Secretary of State for the War and Colonial Departments, every one thought that Mr. Cobbett would get "a snug berth;" he was importuned by many persons *to take care of himself*. But when informed by Mr. Wyndham, that he was actually in office, he told him, "Now, Sir, to make all smooth with regard to me, I beg you to be assured, that it is my resolution to have no place, and not to touch one single farthing of the public money, in any shape whatever, and justice to Mr. Wyndham's memory demands that we should say, that he, upon that occasion, told him, that he should never forfeit any part of his esteem by opposing the ministry; "no," continued he, (addressing Mr. Cobbett,) "nor even by any censure that you

may think it your duty to pass upon my own conduct." Yes, Mr. Cobbett might at this time (1806) have been under Secretary of State to Mr. Wyndham. Mr. Cobbett mentioned to Mr. Wyndham, as a condition, that *the interest of the debt should be reduced,* and that Sir Francis Freeling should not be turned out of the post-office; at this Mr. Wyndham could not avoid laughing—which so provoked Mr. Cobbett that he determined to have nothing at all to do with the matter.

The following is a portion of a lecture delivered at Manchester, two or three years ago—and referring to the point in hand :—" When I came from America, in the year 1800, I was looked upon by the government people as likely to become one of their vigorous partizans. It was the custom in those glorious times of Pitt and paper, to give to the literary partizans of the government what were called " *slices*" of a loan. For instance, MOSES was the loan monger; and, as the *scrip,* as it used to be called, was always directly at a *premium,* a bargain was always made with the loan-monger that he should admit certain favourites of the government to have certain portions of the *scrip* at the same price that he gave for it; I was offered such portion of *scrip,* which, as I was told, would put a hundred pounds or two into my pocket at once. I was frightened at the idea of becoming responsible for the immense sum, upon which this would be the profit. But I soon found that the *scrip* was

never even to be shown to me, and that I had merely to pocket the amount of the *premium*. I positively refused to have anything to do with the matter, for which I got heartily laughed at. But this was of great utility to me; it opened my eyes with regard to the matter of these transactions; it set me to work to understand all about the debt, and the funds and the scrip and the stock, and every thing belonging to it. At every step I found the thing more and more black, and more and more execrable; and it soon brought my mind to a conclusion, that the system was what the *accursed thing* was in the camp of the Israelites, and that the nation never could be happy again until it was got rid of; in which opinion I have remained from that day to this.

"Now, if I had pocketed this money, it must have come out of the estates, skill, and labour, of the people. I should have been a robber indeed; this would have been real robbery, and a great deal more worthy of the gallows, than the forging of a bank note, or the stealing of a sheep. From this, you may judge what loan-making was. If I did not get the hundred pounds or two, some body else did; and we have had to pay interest, and compound interest upon it, from that day to this. I should have thus taken from the nation enough to support four or five labourers and their families for one year at any rate; and if I had taken it, and had bought stock with it, as it is

called, would it not have been right to pay me with a halter, instead of paying me in money? If certain proprietors of newspapers, whom I could name, were brought to a strict account, what, good God! are the sums which they have got in this way! How soon they would come tumbling from their chariots, and lie by the way-side, food for kites and carrion-crows, unless out of pure benevolence, taken up by the grave-robbers and Burkers, and carried "for the benefit of science," to the humane Mr. Warburton's shools of anatomy!"

In the year 1810, Mr. Cobbett was tried and convicted for the publication of a libel, for expressing his indignation, in the *Register*, at the flogging of English local-militia-men in the Isle of Ely, under a guard of Hanoverian soldiers, and was sentenced to be imprisoned for two years in Newgate, to pay a thousand pounds to the King, to give security for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in £3,000, and two sureties in £1,000 each. On the 24th June, 1809, the following article was published in a London newspaper, called the *Courier*:—"The mutiny amongst the LOCAL MILITIA, which broke out at Ely, was *fortunately* suppressed on Wednesday, by the arrival of four squadrons of the GERMAN LEGION CAVALRY from Bury, under the command of General Auckland. Five of the ring-leaders were tried by a Court-Martial, and sentenced to receive *five hundred*

lashes each, part of which punishment they received on Wednesday, and a part was remitted. "*A stoppage for their knapsacks* was the grounds of the complaint that excited this mutinous spirit, which occasioned the men to surround their officers, and demand what they deemed their arrears. The first division of the German Legion, halted yesterday at Newmarket, on their return to Bury." On the perusal of this paragraph, Mr. Cobbett was induced to publish in the *Register* of July, 1809, an article censuring in the strongest terms, these proceedings; for so doing, the Attorney-General prosecuted, as seditious libellers, his printer, publisher, and one of the principal retailers of the *Political Register;* he was brought to trial on the 15th June, 1810, and was by a Special Jury, that is to say, by twelve men out of forty-eight appointed by the master of the Crown-office, found GUILTY; on the 20th of the same month, he was compelled to give bail for his appearance to receive judgment; and, as he was coming up from Botley, (to which place he had returned to his family and his farm, on the evening of 15th) a Tipstaff went down from London in order to seize him, personally. On the 9th of July, he, together with his printer, publisher, and the newsman, were brought into the Court of King's Bench to receive judgment; the three persons were sentenced to be imprisoned for some months in the King's Bench prison, and Mr. Cobbett was sentenced as above—*i. e.*— to be imprisoned two years in Newgate, the great re-

ceptacle for malefactors, and the front of which is the scene of numerous hangings in the course of every year; that part of the prison in which he was sentenced to be confined, is sometimes inhabited by felons, indeed, felons were actually in it at the time he entered, and one man was taken out to be transported in about forty-eight hours after; besides this imprisonment he had to pay a thousand pounds to the king, and to give security for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in the sum of £3,000, and two sureties in the sum of £1,000 each; the whole of this sentence was executed upon him: he was imprisoned the two years, paid the thousand pounds to the king, and gave the required sureties; the Attorney-General was Sir Vicary Gibbs; the judge who sat at the trial Lord Ellenborough; the four judges who sat at passing sentence, were Ellenborough, Grose, de Blanc, and Bailey. Spencer Percival was Prime Minister during the time, until he was shot by John Bellingham, and after him Robert B. Jenkinson, Earl of Liverpool. During his imprisonment, he wrote and published 364 essays and letters upon political subjects, and during the same time, he was visited by persons from 137 cities and towns, many of them as a sort of deputies from various societies. At the expiration of his imprisonment, the ninth of July, 1812, a great dinner was given in London for the purpose of receiving him, and at which 600 persons were present,—Sir Francis Burdett was the President; dinners and other parties were held on

the same occasion in many other places in England. On his way home, he was received at Alton, the first town in Hampshire, with the ringing of the Church bells, and a respectable company met him and gave him a dinner at Winchester. He was drawn for more than the distance of a mile into Botley, by the people, and on his arrival in the village he found all the people assembled to receive him. He addressed them—and explained the cause of his imprisonment, and gave them clear notices respecting the flogging of Local Militia-men at Ely, and respecting the employment of German troops.

Soon after this transaction, a person opposed to Mr. Cobbett, published the following charges:—First, that when sentence was about to be passed, Mr. Cobbett made a proposition to the government to this effect; that, if the proceedings were dropped; that is to say, if he were not brought up for judgment, but suffered to remain unmolested, he would never publish another *Register* or any other thing. Suppose this to have been true, there could not be the least blame attached to him. He had a right do it if he thought proper; he was under no obligation to continue to write; he was in no way bound to sacrifice himself and family if he could avoid it. But the charge is false. No proposition of any sort was ever made by him, or by his authority to the government. The grounds of the charge were as follows: a few days before he was brought up for judgment, he went home to pass the

remaining short space of personal freedom with his family. He had a daughter fifteen years of age, whose birth-day was just then approaching, and, destined to be one of the happiest and one of the most unhappy of his life, on that day his dreadful sentence was passed. One son eleven years old, another six years, another daughter five years old, and another child nearly at hand. The public will easily believe, that under the apprehension of an absence for years, and the great chance of loss of health, if not of life, in a prison, produced indescribable grief. It was at this crisis, that Mr. Cobbett wrote to his attorney, Mr. White, in Essex-street, to make the proposition stated above. But fits of despair were never of long duration in his family. The letter could scarcely have arrived at the Post-office at Southampton, before the courage of his wife and eldest daughter returned. Indignation and resentment took place of grief and alarm; and they cheerfully gave consent to stop the letter. Mr. PETER FINNERTY was at Mr. Cobbett's house at the time; a post-chaise was got, and he went off to London, during the night, and prevented Mr. WHITE from acting on the letter. So much for this charge. He suffered his heavy punishment, and preserved his health and the use of his pen—besides this his family enjoyed uninterrupted health.

Every one at the time regarded the sentence as a sentence of death. He was followed to the prison by

his excellent friend Mr. PETER WALKER, Major CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. ASBURY DICKENS, an American, whom he had known in Philadelphia, and who, casting his eyes round the gloomy yard, and on the infamous wretches, who were to be Cobbett's companions, exclaimed, "Is this the way that they repay all your services, and all your sacrifices in America!" His wife arrived in about half an hour after; but, before that time, he had *bought* himself out of the company of felons; by great favour he finally obtained leave to occupy two rooms in the jailor's house, paying for them TWELVE GUINEAS A WEEK, besides EIGHT MORE that was required to fee various persons, and to get leave to walk an hour on the leads of the prison in the morning; so that here were £2,080, during the two years, exclusive of the £1,000 paid to the Regent. These direct losses were, however trifling, compared with the indirect. He was engaged in the publishing of two works, called the STATE TRIALS and the PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY. There had been a great outlay for these works; several thousands of pounds were due to the paper-maker and the printer. These works were now, as far as regarded Mr. Cobbett ruined. He had bought land in 1806 and 1807. This land, about 500 acres, was *in hand*. Plantations were made, besides preparations for others. He had then a trifling mortgage to pay off; but quite within the reach of his earnings; and, in short, if it had not been for this savage sentence, he would, by the year 1814, have had

his estate entirely clear of every sort of incumbrance.

At this critical moment, every debt that he owed, of every description, poured in for payment:—"The whole nation was cowed down at the time, and under the sway of Percival, Gibbs, and Ellenborough, and with several parts of the country actually under the command of Hanoverian generals, the people seemed like chickens, creeping and piping to find a hiding place, while the kite was hovering in the air. The sons and daughters of corruption openly chuckled at what they deemed my (Mr. Cobbett's) extinguishment; those pretenders to patriotism, the Whigs, congratulated each other in secret, on the fall of their detector! even *some* '*reformers*' thought I had '*gone a little too far*,' they, poor souls, not perceiving, that this miserable apology for their cowardice and selfishness only added contempt to that hatred which the boroughmongers entertained towards them. Almost every one stood aloof, except my *creditors* (never the last to visit you in such a season,) who pressed on amain; so that I really forgot that I was in prison, so great and so ruinous were the torments arising from my pecuniary concerns, which, if I had been at large would have given me no trouble and no care at all. I was looked upon as a man *given over by the doctors*, and every one to whom I owed a shilling, brought me sighs of sorrow, indeed; but, along with these, brought me *his bill*. Look at me, reader, (proceeds Mr. Cobbett,) behold me within a prison walls, paying twenty

guineas a week to redeem myself from the society of felons; see me dragged from my garden, and my fields, and flowers and trees, and shut up in a stinking jail; see me, who had spent a life of ardent and uninterrupted love, with my wife and children always around me; see me harassed incessantly by dunnings, which must necessarily make me fear, that after all the hopes so fondly entertained of being able to provide for wife and children, I might be snatched away, leaving them to be turned out into the high-road: behold me thus, and wonder how I had the fortitude, the calmness, the clearness of mind and the spirit, and the profundity of thought, so conspicuous in "PAPER AGAINST GOLD," which I wrote in that prison, over and above the writing of the *Register*. Why, the truth is, that had it not been for one thing, I should not have been able to bear under this accumulation of evil; and that one thing was, that I had a friend to whom, on the third day after I entered the accursed jail, I wrote, requesting him, in case of my death, to send for, and take care of my wife and children, and from whom, I, *as quickly as possible*, received an answer, containing, amongst others, these words:—'Give thyself no trouble about Nancy and the children. If thee should die, which I hope thee will not for years to come, thy dear family shall find a home under my roof, and shall be to me and all of us *as our own kindred.*' At sixty-four years of age, I feel the tears of gratitude on my cheeks as I transcribe his words. And who was this

man? It was JAMES PAUL, a quaker farmer, of Lower Dublin township, in the State of Pennsylvania; a native American, from a Yorkshire father and mother; a man on whom I had never conferred a favour to the amount of the value of a pin; but under whose hospitable roof I and my wife had spent many and many a happy day, always treated as a son and daughter of the family, though both of us English, and in no way related to this family.

"Having written this letter to Mr. PAUL, I was quite tranquil on the score of provision for wife and children; I wanted not to wait for an answer: all that was necessary was, to make sure of his getting my letter; and of that I took care. So that, the truth is, the greatest load of all was off from my mind at the end of three days. I wanted *no answer* to my letter: I was sure that my family would be provided for; I was *sure* that the tigers would never be able to make them beg their bread, nor to cram them into a work-house; and it is curious, but not more so than true, that I took delight in reflecting on the innocent and happy life that my children would lead in case of my perishing in the hellish jail. If my friend had died before my letter reached him, no matter; there were sons, daughters, plenty of relations; all, or any of them, would have been eager to fulfil my wishes, and to receive my wife and children as their *own*. How snugly hidden *causes* lie, while *effects* are so glaring!

Looking rightly at the matter, my friends in Pennsylvania were, in great part, the cause of PAPER AGAINST GOLD, which laid the axe to the *root* of the paper money system, and which will be admired for ages to come; for it was my reliance on those friends that gave me the spirit and the tranquility of mind that enabled me to write that celebrated series of letters.

"Such was the friendship of JAMES PAUL. No wonder that I named a son after him, and no wonder that that son should, when he signs, never fail to stick the *Paul* into his name; a name that will be honoured by my children's children, as synonymous with all that is frank, sincere, benevolent, kind, and generous. Such was the friendship of my friend PAUL."

Upon one occasion, Mrs. Cobbett, who was in the family way, was discovering a strong desire to have some chesnuts (which were not then ripe enough *to fall*, seeing her hankering about under the tree (which was not far from the house) and, looking up at the chesnuts, Mr. Paul took his axe, and without saying a word, went and felled the tree, containing a load or more of timber; and when Mr. Cobbett deplored the loss of the beautiful tree, and the spoiling of the timber by cutting it at that season, "Poh," said he, "what is a tree compared to a woman or a child?" Such was the friendship of the farmer of Pennsylvania.

There is one circumstance connected with his imprisonment, we must by no means overlook: that is Mrs. Cobbett's conduct during her husband's confine-

ment. The sentence, though it certainly did not prove to be one of death, was in effect one of *ruin*, as far as then-possessed property went. "But this," says Mr. Cobbett, "really appeared as nothing, compared with the circumstance, that I must have *a child born in a felon's jail*, or be absent from the scene at the time of the birth. My wife who had come to see me for the last time previous to her lying-in, perceiving my deep dejection on the approach of her departure for Botley, resolved not to go; and actually went and took a lodging as near to Newgate as she could find one, in order that the communication between us might be as speedy as possible; and in order that I might see the doctor, and receive assurances from him relative to her state. The nearest lodging that she could find was in Skinner-street, at the corner of a street leading to Smithfield. So that there she was, amidst the incessant rattle of coaches and butchers' carts, and the noise of cattle, dogs, and bawling men, instead of being in a quiet and commodious country-house, with neighbours and servants, and every thing necessary about her. Yet, so great is the power of the mind in such cases, she, though the circumstances proved uncommonly perilous, and were attended with the loss of the child, bore her sufferings with the greatest composure, because, at any minute, she could send a message to, and hear from me. If she had gone to Botley, leaving me in that state of anxiety in which she saw me, I am satisfied she would have died; and that

event taking place at such a distance from me, how was I to contemplate her corpse, surrounded by her distracted children, and to have escaped death, or madness myself."

His imprisonment which ended in July, 1812, gave him a terrible blow as to money-matters—a blow not easily recovered. The peace came too, in a few months afterwards, which was greatly injurious to him as a *farmer*, and at the same time as a *writer*. Mr. Cobbett besides, under such heavy bonds, did not dare to be the *proprietor of the Register;* it was transferred to another in order to screen him, which deprived him of the far greater share of the profits. About the year 1816, his pecuniary affairs had become so embarrassed, that he determined on selling his land, and every other sort of property he possessed, and on beginning the world afresh.

But, before the year 1816 had expired, his affairs began to take a different turn. Agricultural distress began to make the nation listen to the call for *Parliamentary Reform;* and the latter part of 1816, saw the kingdom agitated from one end to the other. Now was the time for Cobbett to exert himself; and he in November, 1816, commenced by reducing the price of his *Register* to a low sum, publishing it without a stamp, and keeping himself sheltered from the law by not being the legal proprietor. This altogether changed the aspect of his pecuniary affairs. The sale of the *Register* was prodigious, being about forty or fifty

thousand copies a week.* In short, clear of all expences, and making due allowance for bad debts, he derived a weekly profit of £200, and more than that; so that had he been let alone; had no law been passed to stop and to ruin him, his estate would have been clear at the end of two years, and he would have been as rich as he ever wanted to be. The government at this time, kept a steady eye upon his movements, and the parliament too, saw that his writings had the desired effect—they saw that he would, by the combination of wealth and talent, be too powerful an antagonist. At this moment, therefore, they determined to impede his growing influence; the *Habeas Corpus Corpus Act* was suspended, that they might be enabled to shut him up in prison at their leisure—prevent him from seeing wife, child, or friend; deprive him of the use of pen, ink, and paper, and to keep him confined as long as they pleased.

In the month of March, 1817, LOCKHART, *the Brave,* attempted to draw Mr. Cobbett into an "*affair of honor.*" Mr. Lockhart charged Mr. Cobbett with having made use of insulting and offensive language to him at a meeting at Winchester, on the 11th of March, 1817. Soon after the meeting, *Lockhart the Brave,* proceeded to Mr. Cobbett, who was in the Grand Jury

* Besides the PAPER AGAINST GOLD which was selling in weekly numbers, at the rate of from twenty to thirty thousand a week.

Room, and said to him that he had not been accustomed to receive such language as had that day been applied to him. Mr. Cobbett told him to come when he was less engaged—when the business was over. As Mr. Cobbett and his friends, however, were going out of the room, he paid another visit, and said he was determined to have no delay. He was answered by being told, that he would be waited upon at the Inn; whither he proceeded accompanied with two men as *witnesses;* and was then told that Mr. Cobbett would have no communication with him except in writing. They wanted to sit down in the room, where Mr. Cobbett, Mr. Hunt, and other gentlemen were, but this they were not suffered to do, but ordered out of the room. They went: and then a correspondence took place, which is inserted below word for word, and will no doubt be read with interest:

" Sir,

As you requested me to put in writing the object of my requesting a meeting with you, I beg to inform you, it was with a view to your retracting the word *foul* which you applied to me, by stating I had been guilty of a " foul misrepresentation." I did not hear whether you said of your language *or* intentions,

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

J. J. LOCKHART,"

To Wm. Cobbett, Esq.

(Answer.) *Winchester, 11th March,* 1817.

Sir,

I did not say that it was a *foul* misrepresentation which you had made, but "the *foulest* misrepresentation that ever was made by mortal man," an opinion which I still entertain, and always shall, until you shall fully express your sorrow for the effects of that mortification, which I hope, led your tongue beyond the cool dictates of your mind.

I am, Sir, your most humble

And most obedient Servant,

WILLIAM COBBETT.

Sir,

I have received your answer, which leaves no alternative except that of my insisting on the satisfaction which you owe me as a gentleman, and which I wish you would empower some friend to arrange this evening.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

J. J. LOCKHART.

March 11, 1817.

I shall remain in Winchester this evening for this purpose until eight o'clock, and a friend will deliver this letter to you, to accept your arrangement.

To WILLIAM COBBETT, Esq.

(Answer.) *Winchester, 11th March,* 1817.

Sir,

If I could stay here another day, I would amuse myself with some fun with you, but having business of more importance on hand, I must beg of you to renew your pleasant correspondence, upon our arrival in town. In the meanwhile I remain,

Your most obedient,

And most humble Servant,

WILLIAM COBBETT.

Now, this Mr. Lockhart knew that Mr. Cobbett had written many essays reprobating, in the strongest terms, the practice of duelling. He knew, that Mr. Cobbett held it as a species of suicide for a man (in his situation especially) to fight a duel. Besides, *Lockhart the Brave,* knew well, that, if his challenge had been accepted, Mr. Cobbett would instantly have to forfeit *five thousand pounds sterling,*—for he knew that Mr. Cobbett had been bound in recognizances for *seven years,* from the year 1812.

An American paper published on the 10th of July, 1815, contained the following article:—

"COBBETT.—Cobbett *is silenced:*—We are sorry for it; his price was £1500 per annum. It was given him, and he writes no more. This we have from passengers who lately arrived from London. This new instance of a corrupt heart, will make the friends of England chuckle; they ought not; it is not only a proof of Cobbett's venality, but also of the corrupt

means used by the Government of Great Britain to procure the silence of its adversaries. The great Burke was purchased. Why then feel surprised at Cobbett's tergiversation; both were worth buying, both told unwelcome truths, in a style of irresistible language. We repeat that we are sorry for it. Independent of the facts he descanted upon, his language was fascinating. Americans, therefore, have lost much newspaper amusement. If the truths disclosed by Cobbett had not galled the ministry, the ministry would have suffered Cobbett to sink into oblivion." Of course, this was afterwards discovered to be erroneous. Mr. Cobbett considered himself injured by the insertion of this paragraph, and imposed upon the Editor a *penalty*—not a very heavy one—it was this: that he send by the earliest opportunity to the office of the *Register*, in London, *about* 100 *grains of tobacco seed*, and about 50 *seeds from a fine water melon.*

On the 5th of March, the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act received the Royal assent—it became law—and the people were to submit. Mr. Cobbett was too wary not to perceive that this despotic act was an attempt to entrap him. At this critical moment he used every possible means to rouse the nation to make all the legal efforts in their power to obtain a repeal of this terrible law of *suspension;* the first thing he did was to make them acquainted with

its despotic power,* and, secondly, to make them clearly understand the grounds on which it had been passed. Every man at this time was liable to be seized, at any moment, and to be put into a prison, and kept there for any length of time, cut off from communication with friends, wife, and children; deprived of

* According to the laws of our country, no man can be sent to prison until he has been brought before a Magistrate; and then the Magistrate cannot send him to prison unless there be *evidence upon oath* against the accused party, nor until the accused party be made fully acquainted with the nature of his alledged crime, and has been heard in his defence, and confronted or placed face to face with his accuser before the Magistrate. Then, when the man is, after all this, sent to prison, there must be a written warrant of committment sent with him; and in that warrant the nature of the man's alledged crime must be clearly expressed.

This is the law of the land, and most excellent is this law; for if a man could be seized and sent to prison without these precautions, who would be safe? and, in order that this most necessary law may be duly attended to, there is another law for preventing any neglect of the observance of all these matters; and this law is usually called the *Habeas Corpus Act.* It is so called because the *writ* begins with these two latin words, *Habeas Corpus.* This act makes any man who may be put into prison, or confined in any manner, to apply to a Judge for what is called a *writ*, or command, to bring such man before the Judge, that the Judge may hear his complaint; and then the Judge if he finds that the man has been sent to prison, or confined, *without all the necessary* evidence and forms before mentioned, is obliged to order the prisoner to be discharged; and the prisoner may then prosecute the persons who have imprisoned him. This act of Parliament, is justly called the *Personal Safety Act;* for, without it no man's person is safe, except accidentally; for,

pen, ink, paper, books, and, in short, any man or woman might be taken up, sent to any prison in the kingdom, however distant, without any charge being

if Magistrates or any body else can, take up any man they choose, and send him to prison without *evidence upon oath*, without his being heard in his defence, without his being confronted with his accusers, without any limit of time, and without being able to get a writ to be brought out before a Judge to have the cause of this imprisonment inquired into: if this be the case, what man can possibly regard his person as being in safety. This is the state in which every man is placed by the *Suspension* of the Habeas Corpus Act, that is to say, by making that act of *no force* while the Suspension lasts, and by enabling the Ministers to imprison, and to keep in prison, any body that they shall think proper. This was the case in France before the Revolution. A man, woman, any body is taken up, put into prison, and there kept as long as the persons in power choose. In Spain, during the existence of the Inquisition, the wives or children of the unfortunate creatures so seized, did not dare to *enquire* after the husband or father. They went into mourning, and always spake of the poor wretch as being dead! In France, there was one particular prison, called the *Bastile*, in which wretched victims of power used to be confined. One person, a Scotchman, had been confined in this Bastile, *for more than twenty years*, without ever having been told for what he was confined. He was forgotten, and it was by mere accident, that he was at last released at the request of an English Ambassador. People used to be confined in this cruel manner in virtue of what is called a *Lettre de Cachet*, that is to say, a *Secret Letter*, in which the devoted victim was merely *named and ordered to be shut up*. This was carried to such a length, that these *Secret Letters*, were, at last, actually *sold* in the reign of Louis XV. to any individuals who would pay a sufficient sum for them; so that, any rich man, or woman, who had a spite against another man, or woman, might get such person shut up in a cold prison for any length of time.

made known to them, without knowing what was alledged against him, without having any idea of who was the accuser: without having a hearing from any body, and without their very children knowing how they were treated, or what prison they were in.

Mr. Cobbett did not *stay* after this became *law;* with all possible expedition he prepared to make a *flight.* Three *Registers* were all he had time to write, and these contained no intimation of his intention to leave his native country—though he must have been busily engaged in making necessary preparations from the very first day of the *suspension.* On the 28th of March, however he wrote a leave-taking address to his countrymen. to be published after his departure. The following is extracted:—

My Beloved Countrymen,

Soon after this reaches your eyes, those of the writer will, possibly, have taken the last glimpse of the land that gave him birth, the land in which his parents lie buried, the land of which he has always been so proud, the land in which he leaves a people, whom he shall to his last breath, love and esteem beyond all the rest of mankind.

Every one, if he can do it without wrong to another, has a right to pursue the path to his own happiness; as my happiness, however, has long been inseparable from the hope of assisting in restoring the rights and liberties of my country, nothing could have induced me to quit that country, while there

remained the smallest chance of my being able, by remaining, to continue to aid her cause. No such chance is now left. The laws, which have just been passed, especially if we take into view the real objects of those laws, forbid us to entertain the idea, that it would be possible to write on political subjects according to the dictates of truth and reason, without drawing down upon our heads certain and swift destruction. It was well observed by Mr. BROUGHAM, in a late debate, that every writer, who opposes the present measures, "must now feel, that he sits down to write *"with a halter about his neck;"* an observation the justice of which must be obvious to all the world.

Leaving, therefore, all considerations of personal interest, personal feeling, and personal safety; leaving even the peace of mind of a numerous and most affectionate family wholly out of view, I have reasoned thus with myself: What is now left to be done? We have urged our claims with so much trnth; we have established them so clearly on the ground of both law and reason, that there is no answer to us to be found other than that of a Suspension of our Personal Safety. If I still write in support of those claims, I must be blind not to see that a dungeon is my doom. If I write at all, and do not write in support of those claims, I not only degrade myself, but I do a great injury to the rights of the nation by appearing to abandon them. If I remain here, I must, therefore,

cease to write, from compulsion or from a sense of duty to my countrymen; therefore, it is *impossible* to do any good to the cause of my country by remaining in it; but, if I remove to a country where I can write with perfect freedom, it is not only *possible* but very *probable,* that I shall, sooner or later, be able to render that cause important and lasting services.

Upon this conclusion it is that I have made my determination; for, though life would be scarcely worth preserving with the consciousness that I walked about my fields or slept in my bed merely at the mercy of a Secretary of State; though, under such circumstances, neither the song of the birds in spring, nor the well-strawed homestead in winter, could make me forget that I and my rising family were slaves, still there is something so powerful in the thought of country and neighbourhood and home and friends, there is something so strong in the numerous and united ties with which these and endless other objects fasten the mind to a long-inhabited spot, that to tear oneself away nearly approaches to the separating the soul from the body. But, then, on the other hand, when I asked myself, "What! Shall I submit in silence? Shall I "be as dumb as one of my horses? Shall that indigna- "tion which burns within me be quenched? Shall I "make no effort to preserve even the *chance* of assist- "ing to better the lot of my unhappy country? Shall "that mind, which has communicated its light and "warmth to millions of other minds, now be extin-

" guished for ever; and shall those, who, with thousands " of pens at their command, still see the tide of opi- " nion rolling more and more heavily against them, " now be for ever secure from that pen, by the " efforts of which they feared being overwhelmed? " Shall truth never again be uttered? Shall her voice " never again be heard, even from a distant shore?"

Though I quit my country, far be it from me to look upon her cause as desperate, and still farther be it from me to wish to infuse despondency into your minds. *I can serve that cause no longer by remaining here;* but, the cause itself is so good, so just, so manifestly right and virtuous, and it has been combatted by means so unusual, so unnatural, and so violent, that it *must triumph* in the end.

Let us hope, however, that our country is yet to be freed of the millstone that hangs around her neck. As for me, I shall never cease to use the best of my endeavours to save her from the dangers which threaten her utter destruction; and, I hope you will always bear in mind, that, if I quit her shores for a while, it is only for the purpose of being still able to serve her. It is impossible for any man not to see clearly, that the sole choice is between *silence* and *retreat*. Corruption has put on her armour and drawn her dagger. We must, therefore, fall back and cover ourselves in a way so as to be able to fight her upon more equal terms.— The Giffords, the Southeys, the Walters, the Stuarts, the Stoddarts, and all the hireling crew, who were

unable to answer with the pen, now rush at me with their drawn knife, and exclaim, "*write on!*" To use the words of the Westminster Address, they shake the halter in my face, and rattle in my ears the keys of the dungeon, and then they exclaim with a malignant grin: "*Why do you not continue to write on, you "coward?*" A few years ago, being at Barnet Fair, I saw a battle going on, arising out of some sudden quarrel, between a Butcher and the servant of a west-country Grazier. The Butcher, though vastly superior in point of size, finding that he was getting the worst of it, recoiled a step or two, and *drew out his knife*. Upon the sight of this weapon, the Grazier turned about and ran off till he came up to a Scotchman who was guarding his herd, and out of whose hand the former snatched a good ash stick, about four feet long. Having thus got what he called a *long arm*, he returned to the combat, and, in a very short time, he gave the Butcher a blow upon the wrist, which brought his knife to the ground. The Grazier then fell to work with his stick in such a style as I never before witnessed. The Butcher fell down and rolled and kicked; but, he seemed only to change his position in order to insure to every part of his carcase a due share of the penalty of his baseness. After the Grazier had, apparently, tired himself, he was coming away, when, happening to cast his eye upon the *knife*, he ran back and renewed the basting, exclaiming every now and then, as he caught his breath: "dra thy knife *wo't!*"

He came away a second time, and a second time returned, and set upon the caitiff again: and this he repeated several times, exclaiming always when he re-commenced the drubbing: "*dra thy knife wo't!*" 'Till, at last, the butcher was so bruized, that he was actually unable to stand or even to get-up; and yet, such, amongst Englishmen, is the abhorrence of *foul fighting*, that not a soul attempted to interfere, and nobody seemed to pity a man thus unmercifully beaten.

It is my intention to imitate the conduct of this Grazier; to resort to a *long arm*, and to combat corruption, while I keep myself out of the reach of her knife. Nobody called the Grazier *a coward*, because he did not stay to oppose his fists to a pointed and cutting instrument. My choice, as I said before (leaving all considerations of *Personal Safety* out of the question) lies between *silence* and *retreat*. If I remain here, all other means will be *first* used to reduce me to silence; and if all those means fail, then will come the *dungeon*. Therefore, that I may still be able to write, and to write *with freedom*, too, I shall write, if I live, *from America;* and, my readers may depend on it, that it will not be more than *four months* from the *date of this address*, before the publication of the Weekly Pamphlet will be *resumed in London*, and will be continued very nearly as regularly as it has been for years past. My main object will be to combat corruption; but, I shall also be able to communicate some very useful information; especially as I shall now have, at one

and the same time, the situation of both countries under my eye. If it be said, that I cannot expect to get any one *here* to print, or publish, what I write in America, I ask, then, what is the use of *writing here*, seeing that the same obstacle would exist as to what should be written in England.

I will go, where I shall not be as the shoes upon Lord Sidmouth's and Lord Castlereagh's feet. I will go where I can make sure of the use of pen, ink, and paper; and, these two Lords may be equally sure, that in spite of every thing that they can do, unless they openly enact or proclaim a *censorship* on the Press, or cut off all commercial connection with America, you, my good and faithful countrymen, shall be able to read what I write. In my letter to *Earl Grosvenor*, I said, that something *very near* to the *chopping off of my hand*, or the *poking out of your eyes*, should be done, before I would cease to write and you would cease to read. What has been done would not be *very far* from this, if I were to remain here; but when I wrote that sentence, I had *a full knowledge of what was going to be done*, and, I had also resolved upon the course to pursue in order, as far as related to myself, to defeat its intentions.

A mutual affection, a powerful impulse, equal to that out of which this wonderful sagacity arises, will, I hope, always exist between me and my hard used countrymen; an affection, which my heart assures me, no time, no distance, no new connections, no new

association of ideas however enchanting, can ever destroy, or, in any degree enfeeble or impair. The sight of a free, happy, well fed and well clad people will only tend to invigorate my efforts to assist in restoring you to the enjoyment of those rights and of that happiness, which are so well merited by your honesty, your sincerity, your skill in all the useful arts, your kind-heartedness, your valour, and all the virtues which you possess in so super-eminent a degree. A splendid mansion in America will be an object less dear to me than a cottage on the skirts of Waltham Chace or Botley Common. Never will I own as my friend him who is not a friend of the people of England. I will never become a *Subject* or a *Citizen* in any other state, and will always be a *foreigner* in every country but England.

WM. COBBETT,

Liverpool, 28th March, 1817.

On the evening of the 5th of May, he landed at New York, but only remained there twenty-four hours, and then proceeded to Long Island, distant thirteen miles from New York. Mr. Cobbett took with him his two sons, William and John; they set off from London, early in the morning of Saturday, the 22nd of March, and reached Litchfield the same night, and Liverpool the next night about ten o'clock. Of his reception here, Mr. Cobbett spoke with pleasure and gratitude. On Wednesday evening, the 27th of March,

they embarked on the ship IMPORTER, bound to New York, where they arrived on the 5th of May. Their passage in every respect, was disagreeable; and, upon one occasion very perilous from lightning, which struck the ship twice, shivered two of the masts, killed a man, struck several people slightly, between two of whom Mr. Cobbett was sitting without at all feeling the blow.

All that Mr. Cobbett saw around him here was well calculated to attract the attention and to please the sight of one like himself, brought up in the country, always greatly delighted with, and somewhat skilled in, its various pleasing and healthful pursuits. The people were engaged busily in planting their Indian Corn. He observed the cherry trees, of which there were multitudes, planted in long avenues, or rows, or round the fields, had dropped their blossom, and were beginning to show their loads of fruits. The apple and pear orchards, in extent from one to twenty acres on each farm, were in full and beautiful bloom. Provisions of every description might be had in abundance, and at a very cheap rate.

They were at this time at an Inn, 13 miles from New York. It is on the main road to that city. They lodged and boarded at this Inn, had each a bed-room and good bed, had a room to sit in to themselves. They had smoaked fish, chops, butter and eggs, for breakfast. For dinner they had the finest of fish, bass, mackarel, lobsters; of meat, lamb, veal, ham, &c.

Asparagus in plenty; apple-pies though in the middle of May; and finished with a supper like the breakfast, with preserved peaches and other things. And for all this an excellent cider to drink, with the kindest and most obliging treatment on the part of the Landlord and Landlady and their sons and daughters, they paid no more than *twenty-two shillings and sixpence a week each.* In England the same food and drink and lodging would have cost them nearly the same *every day.* Mr. Cobbett was highly delighted with this sort of living; they had not all these excellent things just for a *show,* or just enough to *smell to;* but in *loads.* Not *an egg,* but a dish full of eggs. Not a snip of meat or of fish; but a plate full. Lump-sugar for their tea and coffee; not broke into little bits the size of a hazle-nut; but in good thumping pieces Besides, there were two things which no money can purchase anywhere. The first is, no grumbling on the part of the landlady, except on account of their eating and drinking *too little,* and the other is, that Mr. Wiggins, (the landlord) had no fastening but *a bit of a chip run in over the latch of a door* to a house which was full of valuable things of all sorts, and about which they left all their things much more carelessly than they would have done in their own house in any part of England.

Though driven again across the Atlantic, the people of England were not bereft of the powerful

assistance of their able Champion. He still adhered faithfully to his native, his beloved, though oppressed and miserable country. He conquered every difficulty; and, though living in America—he struck heavy blows at home; his writings were published regularly once a week in London. Though on the other side of the sea, he never did any act or uttered any word, that should seem to say, that he had abandoned England. If he had preferred tranquility and ease and comfort to duty, he would not have returned; but have sent for his family. This he did not do. He never had an idea of happiness distinct from the happiness and honour of his country. He considered that the greater her distress, the more necessary the presence of those of her sons, who possessed abilities to assist in saving her.

No sooner had he quitted England, than the greater part of the London press, commenced their calumnies. Suspecting that he had gone for ever, no assertion, however wicked or false, was too bad for them to make use of. He was exhibited as a *fraudulent debtor,* and yet as being *without a shilling.* If either had been true, he certainly would not voluntarily have come home, when he could live so comfortably abroad. It is very true, that the sudden breaking up of his affairs on his departure, following a total loss of six thousand pounds and upwards, arising from the imprisonment and fine he had to endure in 1810; it is very true that these things, together with

the expences attending his flight, left him comparatively destitute of immediate pecuniary means. But, was it ever before heard of in the world, that, in answer to a man's political writings, his books of account are to be produced; a list of his pecuniary engagements published; and what is more, his *private letters*, written in confidence many years before, obtained from a base and treacherous agent, and published to the world, and that too, in a partial and garbled state? Yet, all this was done in the face of his wife and daughters who were in this country, and who had to bear up *in silence* against all the reproaches, all the scoffs, all the taunts, and all the savage insults of this cowardly band of literary ruffians.

These cowardly men represented him as being a harsh, tyrannical, passionate, merciless, and even a greedy man. We have said before that, in the whole course of his life, he never was once before a magistrate in any criminal case, either as accuser, or accused; and this is a great deal to say for a man who lived to the age of 73, and having had no one to protect or advise him since he was eleven years old. He never in the whole course of his life brought an action against any man for debt. He never could find in his heart to oppress any man merely because he had not the ability to pay. Nor ever had he an action brought against him for debt in all his life time, except just after his return to England; when an Attorney at Bishop's Waltham in Hampshire, had a writ served on him, without any notice; without ever

writing to him for the money; and, what is worse still, the Sheriff's Officer was sent to a public meeting, at the Crown and Anchor, and *desired to arrest him there, at the very time he should be addressing the meeting.* The Officer had more decency and more honour than to lend himself to such a base purpose. He followed Mr. Cobbett to his lodging; called out a gentleman who was with him, and requested that he would call at his house next day, which he did. The debt was thirty pounds, for malt which had been delivered the year before he went to America, and which had been forgotten. This was the only action that was ever brought against him. He employed, for a great many years, numerous servants and labourers at Botley. He seldom had less than seventeen, altogether; and he never had to complain of any of them to a magistrate, but three times in his life; and of all his servants and labourers, no one even went to a magistrate to complain of him. When the printers turned out for wages in London, his then printer, Mr HANSARD, in order, as he said, to break the *conspiracy* of the men, asked him to *suspend* the publication of his *Register* for a week. Mr Cobbett's answer was, "No: the men have a right to as much wages as they can get: give the men their wages; and, if you must raise your price, I must pay accordingly." Yet, at this very time one of his principal calumniators was cramming printers into jail by half dozens, on a charge of conspiracy to raise their wages. Such are the men, who represented him as a harsh and tyrannical man.

Mr Cobbett had seven children. He never struck one of them in anger, in his life; and in only one single instance did he speak to one of them in a really angry tone and manner. Are there many men who can say as much as this? To his servants, he was one of the most kind and indulgent masters, and was in general repaid as he deserved to be, by their fidelity and attachment. Two of them, however, proved themselves unworthy of such a master. These fellows had in their possession a number of Mr. Cobbett's private letters, which they pulled out and exhibited to the newspaper proprietors, as occasion might serve; though he had been to these men a most generous benefactor. Mrs. Cobbett always suspected these two wretches: the one she called "*a simpering knave,*" the other "*a down* looking rogue." Over and over again, a thousand times, she told her husband to take care of these men!

Another calumny was, that his son (who was *proprietor* of the *Register*) owed eighty thousand pounds sterling to the government for *stamps*. Again; that Mr. Cobbett had craftily removed to his own house at Botley, out of Sir James Kempt's house, in order to defraud Sir James of the rent due to him for his house and farm. As to the charge about the debt owing to the Stamp-office, every body knows that there is no credit given there. The stamps for the *Register* amounted to about 1,500 pounds a year. So that here are upwards of *fifty years' stamps due for,* and his son had only been proprietor about fifteen months. Besides,

they never had one single stamp without *paying for it before it was taken from the Stamp-Office.* And, as for the rent that he owed to Sir JAMES KEMPT, it was for only half a year, that is, 150 pounds. A pretty sum for him to run away from, who was receiving a profit of 200 *pounds a week!* Besides there were 20 acres of Swedish turnips on the farm, pulled up and laid in rows. There was a stack of hay worth nearly a hundred pounds. There was a threshing machine for which he had paid Mr. Kempt himself 60 pounds, and fixtures in the house for which he had paid him a deal more than 60 pounds, exclusive of what was added by Mr. Cobbett. The turnips were worth near 200 pounds; the hot-bed frames, were worth 30 pounds. It was pretended he had removed his residence from Kempt's place to his own, with the *design of being off.* And for what purpose? Could not his goods be seized in one place as well as the other. The facts are these: when Mr. Cobbett left prison, in 1812, he thought it prudent to quit so large a house as his own was, and to lessen all his expences. He, therefore, took Mr. Kempt's place, which had a neat little gentleman's house on it, and the best gardens in the country, having nearly three quarters of a mile of high walls, for fruit trees. But, not having either sold, or let, his own, which he had kept in very good order, and where his plantations and shrubberies had grown up to fine height, he resolved in 1816, to return to his own spacious house. Of Sir James Kempt's property, he had a

lease for 14 years. It had cost him considerable sums of money in purchasing and planting the walls and garden with all the finest sorts of peaches, nectarines, apricots, plumbs, cherries, pears and apples; and the fruit of that very year he took his flight would be worth more than the rent of the whole farm. The vines against the walls which bore nothing scarcely before Mr. Cobbett went to the place, he made, by his management, bear half a ton of grapes. We have digressed perhaps too much in relating minutely these facts; but we have done it merely to carry a stronger conviction to the minds of all who peruse this *Memoir*, that the motive for Mr. Cobbett leaving England is not that which has so oft been imputed to him; and to prove how groundless the base assertions of his enemies were, who attempted to make us believe that Mr. Cobbett was a fraudulent man; and minute as these facts are, their necessity every one will easily perceive. These and thousands of other calumnies were circulated without the least regard for the feelings of those whom Mr. Cobbett had left behind.

Mr. Cobbett was not idle in America; he was not satisfied with being merely a writer; he was a farmer also, and an outline of his agricultural observations and proceedings in this fine and well-governed country will not prove uninteresting to the reader. We shall first give a portion of a Journal kept by himself from the 5th of May, 1817, to the 20th of April, 1818.

1817, *May* 5.—Landed at New York.—6. Went

over to Long Island. 10. The weather has been dry for some time. The grass is only beginning to grow a little. 18. Warm and fine. Grass pushes on. 23. Fine and warm. Things grow away. Saw kidney beans up and looking pretty well. Saw some beets coming up. Not a sprig of parsley to be had for love or money. Saw some cabbage plants up and in the fourth leaf. 27. Spaded up a corner of ground and sowed (in the natural earth) *cucumbers* and *melons*. Just the time they tell me.

June 16. Fine, beautiful day. Never saw such fine weather. Not a morsel of *dirt*. The ground sucks up all. I walk about and work in the land in shoes made of deer skin. They are dressed *white*, like breeches-leather. I began to leave off my coat-to-day, and do not expect to put it on again till October. My hat is a white chip, with broad brims. Never better health. 17. Fine day. The partridges (mis-called quails) begin to sit. The orchard full of birds' nests; and amongst others, a dove is sitting on her eggs in an apple tree. 19. Fine day. But, now comes my alarm! The *musquitoes*, and still worse, the common *house-fly*, which used to plague us in Pennsylvania, and which were the only things I ever disliked belong-to the climate of America. Musquitoes are bred in stagnant water of which here is none. Flies are bred in filth of which none shall be near me as long as I can use a shovel and a broom. 20. Fine days. Carrots and parsnips, sown in the 3d and 4th instant, all up

and in rough leaf. Onions up. The whole garden green in 18 days from the sowing.

July 9.—Fine hot days. Apples to make puddings and pies; but our housekeeper does not know how to make an apple-pudding. She puts the pieces of apple amongst the batter. She has not read Peter Pindar. 10. Fine hot days. I work in the land morning and evening, and write in the day in a north room. The *dress* is now become a very convenient, or rather, a very little inconvenient affair. Shoes, trowsers, shirt and hat. No plague of dressing and undressing! 12. Very hot day. The common black cherries, the little red honey cherries, all ripe now, and falling and rotting by the thousands of pounds weight. But the place which I rent is remarkable for abundance of cherries. Some early peas sown in the second week in June, fit for the table. This is thirty days from the time of sowing. *No flies* yet! No musquitoes! 13. Hot and heavy, like the pleading of a quarter-sessions lawyer. 24. Fine hot day. Harvest (for *grain*) nearly over. The main part of the wheat, &c. is put into *Barns,* which are very large and commodious. Some they put into small ricks, or stacks, out in the fields, and there they stand without any thatching, till they are wanted to be taken in during the winter, and, sometimes they remain out for a whole year. Nothing can prove more clearly than this fact the great difference between this climate and that of England, where, as every body knows, such stacks

would be mere heaps of muck by January, if they were not, long and long before that time, carried clean off the farm by the wind. The crop is sometimes threshed out in the field by the feet of horses, as in the South of France. It is sometimes carried into the barn's floor, where three or four horses, or oxen, going *abreast*, trample out the grain as the sheaves or swarths, are brought in. And this explains to us the humane precept of Moses, "not to *muzzle* the ox as he *treadeth out the grain*," which we country people in England cannot make out. I used to be puzzled too, in the story of RUTH, to imagine how BOAZ could be busy amongst his threshers in the height of harvest.—The weather is so fine, and the grain so dry that, when the wheat and rye are threshed by the flail, the sheaves are barely united, laid upon the floor, receive a few raps, and and are then tied up, clean threshed for straw, without the order of the straws being in the least changed. The straw is as bright as burnished gold. 28. Very, very hot. The Thermometer 85 degrees in the shade; but a *breeze*. Never slept better in all my life. No covering. A sheet under me, and a straw bed. And then so happy to have no clothes to put on but shoes and trowsers! My window looks to the east. The moment the aurora appears, I am in the orchard. 29. Still the same degree of heat. I measured a water-melon runner, which grew eighteen inches in the last 48 hours. The dews now are equal to showers; I frequently, in the morning, wash hands

and face, feet and legs, in the dew on the high grass. The Indian corn shoots up now so beautifully!

August 1.—Still melting hot. I take off two shirts a day wringing wet. I have a clothes-horse to hang them on to dry. No ailment. Head always clear. Go to bed by day-light very often. Just after the hens go to roost, and rise again with them. 2. Hotter and hotter. *Not a single musquito yet.* 8. Fine rain. It comes pouring down. 9. Rain still, which has now lasted 60 hours. Killed a lamb, and, in order to keep it fresh, sunk it down into the *well.* 14. Very hot indeed. 80 degrees in a north aspect at 9 in the evening Three wet shirts to-day. Obliged to put on a dry shirt to go to bed in. 23. Fine hot day. I have now got an English woman-servant, and she makes us famous apple-puddings. She says she has never read Peter Pindar's account of the dialogue of the king and the cottage woman; and yet she knows very well how to get the apples within side of the paste. 28. Windy and rather coldish. Put on cotton stockings and a waistcoat with sleeves. Do not like this weather. 31. Fine hot day. Prodgious *dews.*

September 3.—Famously hot. Fine breezes. Began imitating the Disciples, at least in their *diet;* for, to-day we began "*plucking the ears of corn*" in a patch planted in the garden on the second of June. But, we, in imitation of Pindar's pilgrim, take the liberty to boil our corn. We shall not starve now. 9. Rather hotter. We amongst seven of us eat about 25 ears of

corn a-day. With *me* it wholly supplies the place of bread. It is the choicest gift of God to man, in the way of food. I remember that ARTHUR YOUNG observes, that the proof of *a good climate* is that Indian corn comes to perfection in it. Our corn is very fine. I believe, that a wine-glass full of milk might be squeezed out of one ear. No wonder the Disciples were tempted to pluck it when they were hungry, though it was on the Sabbath-day! 10. Appearances for rain; and it is time; for my neighbours begin to cry out, and our rain-water cistern begins to shrink. The *well* is there, to be sure; but, to pull up water from 70 feet is no joke, while it requires nearly as much sweat to get it up as we get water. 18. Beautiful day. Not very hot. Wear stockings now and a waistcoat and neck-handkerchief. 28. Very fine and warm. Left off the stockings again.

October 7.—Very fine and warm, 65 degrees in shade at seven o'clock this morning. Windy in the afternoon. The wind is knocking down the *fall-pippins* for us. One picked up to-day weighed 12½ ounces avoirdupois weight. The average weight is about nine ounces, or, perhaps, ten ounces. This is the finest of all apples. Hardly any core. Some *none at all.* The richness of the pine-apple without the roughness. If the king could have seen one of *these* in a dumpling! This is not the Newtown Pippin, which is sent to England in such quantities. That is a *winter* apple. Very fine at Christmas; but far inferior to this fall.

pippin, taking them both in their state of perfection. It is useless to send the trees to England, unless the heat of the sun and the rains and the dews could be sent along with the trees. 11. Beautiful day, 61 degrees in shade. A little white frost this morning. It just touched the tips of the kidney bean leaves; but not those of the cucumbers or melons, which are near fences. 12. Beautiful day. Have not put on a *coat* yet. Wear thin stockings, or socks, waistcoat with sleeves, and neckcloth. Same day precisely. Finished Buck-wheat threshing and winnowing. The men have been away at a horse-race; so that it has laid out in the field, partly threshed and partly not, for five days. If rain had come, it would have been of no consequence. All would have been dry again directly afterwards. What a stew a man would be in in England, if he had his grain lying about out of doors in this way! The *cost* of threshing and winnowing 60 bushels was seven dollars, £1 11s. 6d. English money, that is to say, 4s. a quarter, or eight Winchester bushels. But, then, the *carting* was next to nothing. Therefore, though the labourers had a dollar a day each, the expense upon the whole, was not so great as it would have been in England. So much does the climate do! 25. Rain, and warm, like a June rain in England. 57 degrees in shade. The late frosts have killed, or, at least, pinched the leaves of the trees; and they are red, yellow, russett, brown, or of a dying green. Never was anything so beautiful as the bright sun, shining

through these fine lofty trees upon the gay verdure beneath. 28. Fine day. 56 degrees in shade. Pulled up a *Radish,* that weighed 12 pounds! I say, *twelve,* and measured 2 feet 5 inches round. From common English seed.

November 4. Very, very fine. Never saw such pleasant weather. *Digging potatoes.* 11. Very fine. When I got up this morning, I found the thermometer hanging on the Locust-trees, dropping with dew, at 62 degrees. *Left of my coat again.*

December 1. Fine warm and beautiful day; but we begin to fear the setting in of winter, and I am very busy in covering up cabbages, mangel wurzel, turnips, beet, carrots, parsnips, parsley, &c. the mode of doing which (not less useful in England than here, though not indispensably necessary) shall be described when I come to speak of the management of these several plants. 15. We kill mutton now. Ewes brought from Connecticut, and sold to me here at two dollars each in July, just after shearing. I sell them now alive at three dollars each from the grass. Killed and sent to market, they leave me the loose fat for candles, and fetch about three dollars and a quarter besides. A hardish frost. 21. Very sharp indeed. Makes us *run,* where we used to walk in the fall, and to saunter in the summer. It is no new thing to me; but it makes our English people shrug up their shoulders. 25. Had some English friends. Surloin of own beef. Spent the evening in light of own candles, as

handsome as ever I saw, and I think the very best I ever saw.

January 4.—A frost that makes us jump and skip about like larks. Very seasonable for a sluggish fellow. Prepared for winter. Patched up a boarded building, which was formerly a coach-house; but, which is not so necessary for me, in that capacity, as that of a *fowl-house*. The neighbours tell me, that the poultry will roost out on the trees all the winter, which, the weather being so *dry* in winter, is very likely; and, indeed, they must if they have no house, which is almost universally the case. However, I mean to give the poor things a *choice*. I have *lined* the said coach-house with corn-stalks and leaves of trees, and have tacked up cedar-boughs to hold the lining to the boards, and have laid a bed of leaves a foot thick all over the floor. I have secured all against dogs, and have made ladders for the fowls to go in at holes six feet from the ground. I have made pig-styes, lined round with cedar-boughs and well covered. A sheep-yard, for a score of ewes to have lambs in spring, surrounded with a hedge of cedar boughs, and with a shed for the ewes to be under if they like. The oxen and cows are tied up in a stall. The dogs have a place well covered, and lined with corn stalks and leaves. And now, I can, without anxiety, sit by the fire, or lie in bed and hear the North-Wester Whistle. 9. A harder frost, and snow at night. The fowls which have been peeping at my ladders for two or three

evenings, and partially roosting in their house, made their *general entry* this evening! They are the best judges of what is best for them. The *turkeys* boldly set the weather at defiance, and still roost on *the top*, the ridge of the roof of the house. Their feathers prevent their legs from being frozen, and so it is with all poultry; but, still, a house *must*, one would think, be better than the open air at this season. 10. Snow, but *sloppy*. I am now at New York on my way to Pennsylvania. 12. Very sharp frost. Set off for Philadelphia. Broke down on the road in New Jersey. 13. Very hard frost still. Found the Delaware which divides New Jersey from Pennsylvania, frozen over. Arrived at Philadelphia in the evening. 15. Same weather. The question eagerly put to me by every one in Philadelphia is, "Don't you think the city *greatly* improved?" They seem to me to confound *augmentation* with *improvement*. It always was a fine city, since I first knew it; and it is very greatly augmented. It has, I believe, nearly doubled its extent and number of houses since the year 1799. But, after being, for so long a time, familiar with London, every other place appears little. After living within a few hundreds of yards of Westminster Hall and the Abbey Church, and the Bridge, and looking from my own windows into St. James's Park, all other buildings and spots appear mean and insignificant. I went today to see the house I formerly occupied. How small! It is always thus; the words *large* and *small* are car-

ried about with us in our minds, and we forget real *dimensions*. The idea, such as it was received, remains during our absence from the object. When I returned to England, in 1800, after an absence from the country parts of it, of sixteen years, the trees, the hedges, even the parks and woods, seemed so small. It made me laugh to hear little gutters that I could jump over, called *Rivers!* The Thames was but a "*Creek!*" But, when in about a month after my arrival in London, I went to *Farnham*, the place of my birth, what was my surprise! Everything was become so pitifully *small!* I had to cross, in my post-chaise, the long and dreary heath of Bagshot. Then, at the end of it, to mount a hill, called Hungry-hill; and from that hill I knew that I should look down into the beautiful and fertile vale of Farnham. My heart fluttered with impatience, mixed with a sort of fear, to see all the scenes of my childhood; for I had learnt before, the death of my father and mother. There is a hill, not far from the town, called *Crooksbury-Hill*, which rises up out of a flat, in the form of a *cone*, and is planted with Scotch fir-trees. Here I used to take the eggs and young ones of crows and magpies. This hill was a famous object in the neighbourhood. It served as the superlative degree of height. "As high *as Crooksbury Hill*" meant, with us, the utmost degree of height. Therefore, the first object that my eyes sought was this hill. *I could not believe my eyes!* Literally speaking, I, for a moment, thought the famous hill removed, and a lit-

tle heap put in its stead; for I had seen in New Brunswick, a single rock, or hill of solid rock, ten times as big, and four or five times as high! The post-boy, going down hill, and not a bad road, whisked me, in a few minutes, to the Bush Inn, from the garden of which I could see the prodigious sand-hill, where I had begun my gardening works. What a *nothing!* But now came rushing into my mind, all at once, my pretty little garden, my little blue smock-frock, my little nailed shoes, my pretty pigeons, that I used to feed out of my hands, the last kind words and tears of my gentle and tender-hearted and affectionate mother! I hastened back into the room. If I had looked a moment longer, I should have dropped. When I came to reflect, *what a change!* I looked down at my dress. What a change! What scenes I had gone through! How altered my state? I had dined the day before at the Secretary of State's in company with Mr. *Pitt*, and had been waited upon by men in gaudy liveries! I had nobody to assist me in the world. No teachers of any sort. Nobody to shelter me from the consequence of bad, and no one to counsel me to good, behaviour. I felt proud. The distinctions of rank, birth, and wealth, all became nothing in my eyes; and from that moment (less than a month after my arrival in England) I resolved never to bend before them. 16. Same weather. Went to see my old Quaker-friends at Bustleton, and particularly my beloved friend JAMES PAUL, who is very ill. 17. I returned to Philadelphia. 22. Hard frost. My

business in Pennsylvania is with the legislature. It is sitting at *Harrisburgh*. Set off to-day by stage. Fine country; fine barns; fine farms. Got to Lancaster. The largest *inland* town in the United States. A very clean and good town. No beggarly houses. All look like ease and plenty. 27. Thaws. Warm. Tired to death of the *tavern* at Harrisburgh, though a very good one. The cloth spread three times a day. Fish, fowl, meat, cakes, eggs, sausages; all sorts of things in abundance. Bread, lodging, *civil* but not *servile* waiting on, beer, tea, coffee, chocolate. Price, a dollar and a quarter a day. Here we meet altogether: Senators, judges, lawyers, tradesmen, farmers, and all. I am weary of the everlasting loads of meat. *Weary of being idle.* How few such days have I spent in my whole life! 28. Thaw and rain. My *business* not coming on, I went to a *country* tavern, hoping there to get a room to myself, in which to read my English papers, and sit down to writing. I am now at *M'Allister's tavern,* situate at the foot of the first ridge of mountains; or rather, upon a little nook of land, close to the river, where the river has found a way through a break in the chain of mountains. Great enjoyment here. Sit and read and write. My mind is again in England. Mrs. M'Allister just suits me. Lets me eat and drink what I like, and when I like, and gives mugs of nice milk. I find here, a very agreeable and instructive occasional companion, in Mr. M'Allister the elder. 29. Very hard frost this morning.

Change very sudden. All about the house a glare of ice. 30. Not so hard. Icicles on the trees on the neighbouring mountains like so many millions of sparkling stones, when the sun shines, which is all the day. 31. Same weather. Two farmers of Lycoming county had heard that William Cobbett was here. They modestly introduced themselves. What a contrast with the "*yeoman cavalry!*"

February 4.—Little snow. Not much frost. This day, thirty-three years ago, I enlisted as a soldier. I always keep the day in recollection. 5. Having been to Harrisburgh on the second, returned to Mr. M'Allister's to-day *in a sleigh*. The river begins to be frozen over. It is about a mile wide. 8. *A real frost*. 9. Sharper. They say, that the thermometor is down. 10 *degrees below nought*. 11. Went back again to Harrisburgh. Mild frost. 12. Not being able to bear the idea of dancing attendance, came to Lancaster, in order to see more of this pretty town. A very fine tavern (Slaymaker's); room to myself; excellent accommodations. Warm fires. Good and clean beds. *Civil* but not *servile* landlord. The eating still more overdone than at Harrisburgh. Never saw such profusion. I have made a bargain with the landlord; he is to give me a dish of chocolate a day *instead of dinner*. 16. A hard frost. Lancaster is a pretty place. No *fine* buildings; but no *mean* ones. Nothing *splendid* and nothing *beggarly*. The people of this town seem to have had the prayer of HAGAR granted them: "Give

me, O Lord, neither poverty nor riches." Here are none of those poor, wretched habitations, which sicken the sight at the *out-skirts* of cities and towns in England; those abodes of the poor creatures, who have been reduced to beggary by the cruel extortions of the rich and powerful. And, this remark applies to all the towns of America that I have ever seen. This is a fine part of America. *Big barns,* and modest dwelling-houses. Barns of stone a hundred feet long and forty wide, with two floors, and raised to go into them. So that the waggons go into the first floor upstairs. Below are stables, stalls, pens, and all sorts of conveniences. Up stairs are rooms for threshed corn and grain; for tackles for meal, for all sorts of things. In the front (South) of the barn is the cattle yard. These are very fine buildings. And, then, all about them looks so comfortable, and gives such manifest proofs of ease, plenty, and happiness! Such is the country of WILLIAM PENN's settling! It is a curious thing to observe the *farm-houses* in this country. They consist almost without exception, of a considerably large and a very neat house, with sash windows, and of a *small house,* which seems to have been *tacked on* to the larger one; and, the proportion they bear to each other, in point of dimensions, is, as nearly as possible, the proportion of size between a *cow* and her *calf,* the latter a month old. But, as to the *cause,* the process has been the opposite of this instance of the works of nature, for it is the large

house which has grown out of the small one. The father, or grandfather, while he was toiling for his children, lived in the small house, constructed chiefly by himself, and consisting of rude materials. The means accumulated in the small house, enabled a son to rear the large one; and, though, when *pride* enters the door, the small house is sometimes demolished, few sons in America have the folly, or want of feeling to commit such acts of filial ingratitude, and of real self-abasement. For, what inheritance so valuable and so honourable can a son enjoy as a proof of his father's iudustry and virtue? The progress of wealth and ease and enjoyment, evinced by this regular increase of the size of the farmer's dwellings, is a spectacle, at once pleasing, in a very high degree, in itself, and, in the same degree, it speaks the praise of the system of government, under which it has taken place. What a contrast with the farm-houses in England! There the *little* farm-houses are falling into ruins, or, are actually become cattle sheds, or, at least, *cottages*, as they are called, to contain a miserable labourer, who ought to have been a farmer, as his grandfather was. Five or six farms are there *now* levelled into one, in defiance of the law; for, there is a law lo prevent it. The farmer has, indeed, a *fine house;* but what a life do his labourers lead! The cause of this sad change is to be found in the crushing taxes; and the cause of them, in the Borough-usurpation, which has robbed the people of their best right, and, indeed, without

which right they can enjoy no other. They talk of the *augmented population* of England; and, when it suits the purpose of the tyrants, they boast of this *fact*, as they are pleased to call it, as a proof of the fostering nature of their government; though, just now, they are preaching up the wild and foolish doctrine of PARSON MALTHUS, who thinks, that there are *too many* people, that they ought (those who *labour*, at least) to be restrained from breeding so fast. But, as to the fact, I do not believe it. There can be nothing in the shape of *proof;* for no actual enumeration was ever taken till the year 1800. We know well, that London, Manchester, Birmingham, Bath, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and all Lancashire and Yorkshire, and some other counties, have got a vast increase of miserable beings huddled together. But, look at Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Wiltshire, Hampshire, and other counties. You will there see *hundreds of thousands* of acres of land, where the old marks of the plough are visible, but which have not been cultivated for, perhaps, half a century. You will there see places, that were once considerable towns and villages, now having, within their ancient limits, nothing but a few cottages, the *Parsonage*, and a *single Farm-house*. It is a curious and a melancholy sight, where an ancient church, with its lofty spire or tower; the church sufficient to contain a thousand, or two or three thousand of people conveniently, now stands surrounded by a score; or half a score of miserable mud-houses, with

floors of earth, and covered with thatch; and this sight strikes your eye in all parts of the five Western counties of England. Surely these churches were not built without the existence of a population somewhat proportionate to their size! Certainly not; for the churches are of various sizes, and, we sometimes see them very small indeed. Let any man look at the *sides of the hills* in these counties, and also in Hampshire, where *downs,* or open lands, prevail. He will there see, not only that those hills were formerly cultivated; but that *banks,* from distance to distance, were made by the *spade,* in order to form little flats for the plough to go, without tumbling the earth down the hill; so that the side of a hill looks, in some sort, like *the steps of a stairs.* Was this done *without hands,* and without *mouths* to consume the grain raised on the sides of these hills? The Funding and Manufacturing and Commercial and Taxing System has, by drawing wealth into great masses, drawn men also into great masses. London, the manufacturing places, Bath, and other places of dissipation, have, indeed, wonderfully increased in population. Country seats, Parks, Pleasure-gardens, have, in like degree, increased in number and extent. And, in just the same proportion has been the increase of Poor-houses, Mad-houses, and Jails. But *the people of England,* such as FORTESCUE described them, have been swept away by the ruthless hand of the Aristocracy, who, making their approaches by slow degrees, have at last, got into

their grasp the substance of the whole country. 19. Frost, not very hard.—Quitted Harrisburgh, very much *displeased;* but, on this subject, I shall, if possible, keep silence, till *next year,* and until the people of Pennsylvania have had time to reflect; to clearly understand my affair; and when they do understand it, I am not at all afraid of receiving justice at their hands, whether I am present or absent. Slept at Lancaster. One night more in this very excellent Tavern. 28. *Very warm.*—I hate this weather. Hot upon my back, and melting ice under my feet. The people (those who have been lazy) are chopping away with axes the ice, which has grown out of the snows and rains, before their doors during the winter. The hogs (best of scavengers) are very busy in the streets seeking out the bones and bits of meat, which have been flung out and frozen down amidst water and snow, during the two foregoing months. I mean including the present month. At New York, (and I think at Philadelphia also) they have *corporation* laws to prevent hogs from being in the streets. For *what reason,* I know not, except putrid meat be pleasant to the smell of the inhabitants. But, corporations are seldom the wisest of lawmakers. It is argued, that, if there were no hogs in the streets, people would not throw out their orts of flesh and vegetables. Indeed, what would they do with those orts then? Make their hired servants eat them? The very proposition would leave them to cook and wash for themselves. Where,

then, are they to fling these effects of superabundance? Just before I left New York for Philadelphia, I saw a sow very comfortably dining upon a full quarter part of what appeared to have been a *fine leg of mutton.* How many a family in England would if within reach, have seized this meat from the sow! And, are the tyrants, who have brought my industrious countrymen to that horrid state of misery, *never* to be called to account? Are they *always* to carry it as they now do? Every object almost, that strikes my view, send my mind and heart back to England. In viewing the ease and happiness of this people, the contrast fills my soul with indignation, and makes it more and more the object of my life to assist in the destruction of the diabolical usurpation, which has trampled on king as well as people.

March 1.—Rain. Dined with my old friend SEVERNE, an honest Norfolk man, who used to carry his milk about the streets, when I first knew him, but who is now a man of considerable property, and, like a wise man, lives in the same modest house where he formerly lived. Excellent roast beef and plum pudding. At this house I found an Englishman, and from *Botley* too! I had been told of such a man being in Philadelphia, and that the man said, that he had *heard* of me, "*heard of such a gentleman, but did not know much of him.*" This was odd. I was desirous of seeing this man. Mr. Severne got him to his house. His name is VERE. I knew him the moment I saw him;

and, I wondered *why* it was that he *knew so little of me.* I found that he *wanted* work, and that he had been *assisted* by some society in Philadelphia. He said he was *lame,* and he might be a little, perhaps. *I offered him work at once.* No: he wanted to have the care of a farm! "Go," said I, for shame, and ask some farmers *for work.* You will find it *immediately,* and with good wages. What should the people in this country see in your face to induce them to keep you in idleness? They did not send for you. You are a young man, and you come from a country of able labourers. You may be rich if you will work. This gentleman who is now about to cram you with roast beef and plum pudding came to this city nearly as poor as you are; and, I first came to this country in no better plight. Work, and I wish you well; be idle and you ought to starve." He told me, then, that he was a *hoop-maker;* and yet, observe, he wanted to have the *care* of a farm. N.B. If this book (*Year's Residence in America,*) should ever reach the hands of Mr. RICHARD HINXMAN, my excellent good friend of Chilling, I beg him to show this note to Mr. NICHOLAS FREEMANTLE, of Botley. *He* will know well all about this VERE. Tell Mr. FREEMANTLE, that the Spaniels are beautiful, that Woodcocks breed here in abundance; and tell him, above all, that I frequently think of him as a pattern of industry in business, of skill and perseverance and good humour as a sportsman, and of honesty and kindness as a neigh-

bour. Indeed, I have pleasure of thinking of all my Botley neighbours, except the Parson, who, for their sakes, I wish, however, was my neighbour *now;* for *here* he might pursue his calling very *quietly.* 9. Thaw. Dry and fine. Took leave, I fear for ever, of my old and kind friend, JAMES PAUL. His brother and son promised to come and see me here. I have pledged myself to *transplant* ten acres of Indian corn; and, if I write, in August, and say that *it is good,* THOMAS PAUL has promised that he will come; for he thinks that the scheme is a mad one. 10. Same weather.—*Mr. Varee,* a son-in-law of Mr. James Paul, brought me yesterday to another son-in-law's, Mr. EZRA TOWNSHEND, at Bibery. Here I am amongst the thick of the Quakers, whose houses and families pleased me so much formerly, and which pleasure is all now revived. Here all is ease, plenty and cheerfulness. These people are never *giggling,* and never in *low-spirits.* Their kindness is shown more in acts than in words. Let others say what they will, I have uniformly found those whom I have intimately known of this sect, sincere and upright men; and I verily believe, that all those charges of hypocrisy and craft, that we hear against Quakers, arise from a feeling of *envy;* envy inspired by seeing them possessed of such abundance of all those things, which are the fair fruits of care, industry, economy, sobriety and order, and which are justly forbidden to the drunkard, the glutton, the prodigal, and the lazy. As the day of my coming to

Mr. TOWNSHEND'S had been announced beforehand, several of the young men, who were babies when I used to be there formerly, came to see "BILLY COBBETT," of whom they had heard and read so much. When I saw them and heard them, "*what a contrast,*" said I to myself, "with the senseless, gaudy, upstart, hectoring, insolent, and cruel Yeomanry *Cavalry* in England, who, while they grind their labourers into the revolt of starvation, gallantly sally forth with their sabres, to chop them down at the command of a Secretary of State; and, who, the next moment, creep and fawn like spaniels before their Boroughmonger Landlords! At Mr. TOWNSHEND'S I saw a man in his service, lately from Yorkshire, but an Irishman by birth. He had read many of my "little books." I shook him by the hand, told him he had now got a good house over his head and a kind employer, and advised him *not to move for one year*, and to save his wages during that year. 11. Same open weather.—I am now at *Trenton*, in New Jersey, waiting for something to carry me on towards New York. Yesterday, Mr. TOWNSHEND sent me on, under an escort of Quakers, to Mr. Anthony Taylor's. He was formerly a merchant in Philadelphia, and now lives in his very pretty country house, on a very beautiful farm. He has some as fine and fat oxen as we generally see at Smithfield market in London. I think they will weigh *sixty score each*. Fine farm yard. Every thing belonging to the farm good, but what a neglectful *gardener!* Saw

some *white thorns* here (brought from England) which, if I had wanted any proof, would have clearly proved to me, that they would, with less *care*, make as good hedges here as they do at Farnham in Surrey. Here my escort quitted me; but, luckily, Mr. NEWBOLD, who lives about ten miles nearer Trenton than Mr. Taylor does, brought me on to his house. He is a much better gardener, or, rather, to speak the truth, has succeeded a better, whose example he has followed in part. But his farm yard and buildings! This was a sight indeed! Forty head of horned cattle in a yard, enclosed with a stone wall; and five hundred Merino ewes, besides young lambs, in the finest, most spacious, best contrived, and most substantially built sheds I ever saw. The barn surpassed all that I had seen before. His house (large, commodious, and handsome) stands about two hundred yards from the Turnpike-road, leading from Philadelphia to New York, and looks on and over the Delaware, which runs parallel with the road, and has surrounded it. and at the back of it, five hundred acres of land, level as a lawn, and two feet deep in loam, that never requires a water-furrow. This was the finest sight that I ever saw as to farm-buildings and land. I forgot to observe, that I saw in Mr. Taylor's service, another man recently arrived from England. A Yorkshire man. He too wished to see me. He had got some of my "*little books*," which he had preserved and brought out with him. Mr. Taylor was much pleased with him: an

active, servant man; and, if he follow my advice, to remain *a year* under one roof, and save his wages, he *will*, in a few years be a rich man. These men must be brutes indeed not to be sensible of the great kindness and gentleness and liberality, with which they are treated. Mr. Taylor came this morning to Mr. Newbold's, and brought me on to TRENTON. I am at the stage-tavern, where I have just dined upon cold ham, cold veal, butter and cheese, and a peach-pye; nice clean room, well furnished, waiter clean and attentive, plenty of milk; and charge *a quarter of a dollar!* I thought, that Mrs. Joslin at Princes-town, (as I went on to Philadelphia,) Mrs. Beuler at Harrisburgh, Mr. Slaymaker at Lancaster, and Mrs. M'Allister, were low enough in all conscience; but, really, this charge of Mrs. Anderson beats all. I had not the face to pay the waiter a quarter of a dollar; but gave him half a dollar, and told him to keep the change. He is a black man. He thanked me. But they never ask for anything. But, my vehicle is come, and now I bid adieu to Trenton, which I should have liked better, if I had not seen so many young fellows lounging about the streets, and leaning against door-posts, with quids of tobacco in their mouths, or segars stuck between their lips, and with dirty hands and faces.

Brunswick, New Jersey.—Here I am, after a ride of about 30 miles, since two o'clock, in what is called a Jersey waggon, through such *mud* as I never saw

before. Up to the stock of the wheel; and yet a pair of very little horses have dragged us through it in the space of *five hours*. The best horses and driver, and the worst roads I ever set my eyes on. This part of Jersey is a sad spectacle, after leaving the brightest of all the bright parts of Pennsylvania. My driver, who is a tavern-keeper himself, would have been a very pleasant companion, if he had not drunk so much spirits on the road. This is the great misfortune of America! As we were going up a hill very slowly, I could perceive him looking very hard at my cheek for some time. At last, he said:—"I am wondering, Sir, to see you look so *fresh* and so *young*, considering what you have gone through in the world;" though I cannot imagine how he had learnt who I was. "I'll tell you," said I, "how I have contrived the thing. I rise early, go to bed early, eat sparingly, never drink anything stronger than small beer, shave once a day, and wash my hands and face clean three times a day, at the very least." He said that was *too much* to think of doing. 12. Warm and fair. Like an English *first of May* in point of warmth. I got to Elizabeth Town Point through beds of mud. Twenty minutes too late for the steam-boat. Have to wait here at the tavern till to-morrow. Great mortification. Supped with a Connecticut farmer who was taking on his daughter to Little York, in Pennsylvania. The rest of his family he took on in the fall. He has *migrated*. His reasons were these: he has five sons, the eldest 19 years of

age, and several daughters. Connecticut is thickly settled. He has not the means to buy farms for the sons there. He, therefore, goes and gets cheap land in Pennsylvania; his sons will assist him to clear it; and, thus, they will have a farm each. To a man in such circumstances, and "born with an axe in one hand, and a gun in the other," the western countries are desirable; but not to *English farmers*, who have great skill in fine cultivation, and who can purchase near New York or Philadelphia. This YANKEE (the inhabitants of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, only, are called *Yankees)* was about the age of Sir FRANCIS BURDETT, and, if he had been dressed in the usual clothes of Sir Francis, would have passed for him. Features, hair, eyes, height, make, manner, look, hasty utterance at times, musical voice, frank deportment, pleasant smile. All the very fac-simile of him. I had some early York cabbage-seed and some cauliflower-seed in my pocket, which had been sent me from London, in a letter, and which had reached me at Harrisburgh. I could not help giving him a little of each. 13. Same weather. A fine open day. Rather a cold May-day for England. Came to New York by the steam-boat. Over to this island by another, took a little light waggon, that wisked me home over roads as dry and as smooth as gravel walks in an English Bishop's garden in the month of July. Great contrast with the bottomless muds of New Jersey. As I came along, saw those

fields of rye, which were so green in December, now *white*. Not a single sprig of green on the face of the earth. Found that my man had *ploughed ten acres of ground*. The frost not quite clean out of the ground. It has penetrated *two feet eight inches*. The weather here has been nearly about the same as in Pennsylvania; only less snow and less rain. 15. Open weather. Very fine. *Young chickens*. I hear of no other in the neighbourhood. This is the effect of my *warm fowl-house!* The house has been supplied with eggs *all the winter*, without any interruption. I am told, that this has been the case at no other house hereabouts. We have *now* an abundance of eggs. More than a large family can consume. We send some to market. The fowls, I find, have wanted no feeding except during the snow, or in the very, very cold days, when they *did not come out of their house all the day*. A certain proof that they like the warmth. 21. Same weather. The day like a fine May-day in England. I am writing without fire, and in my waistcoat without coat. 33. Mild and fine. A sow had a litter of pigs *in the leaves under the trees*. Judge of the weather by this. The wind blows cold; but she has drawn together great heaps of leaves, and protects her young ones with surprising sagacity and exemplary care and fondness. 26. Very cold wind. We try to get the sow and pigs into the buildings. But the pigs do not follow and we cannot, with all our temptations of corn and our caresses, get the sow to move without

them by her side. She must remain 'till they choose to travel. How does nature, through the conduct of this animal, reproach those mothers, who cast off their new-born infants to depend on a hireling's breast! Let every young man, before he marry, read, upon this subject, the pretty poem of Mr. ROSCOE, called "the nurse;" and, let them also read, on the same subject, the eloquent, beautiful, and soul-affecting passage, in Rosseau's "Emile." 31. Fine warm day. As the *winter* is now gone, let us take a look back at its *inconveniences* compared with those of an English winter. We have had three months of it; for, if we had a few sharp days in December, we have had many very fine and *without* fire in March. In England, winter really begins in November, and does not end till Mid-March. Here we have *greater cold;* there, four times as much *wet.* I have had my great coat on only twice, except when sitting in a stage, travelling. I have had gloves on no oftener, for, I do not, like the clerks of the House of Boroughmongers, write in gloves. I seldom meet a waggoner with gloves or great coat on. It is generally so dry. This is the great friend of man and beast. Last summer I wrote home for nails to nail my shoes for winter. I could find none here. What a foolish people not to have shoe-nails! I forgot, that it was likely, that the absence of shoe-nails argued an absence of the want of them. The nails are not come; and I have not wanted them. There is no dirt, except for about ten days at

the breaking up of the frost. The dress of a labourer does not cost half so much as in England. This *dryness* is singularly favourable to all animals. They are hurt far less by dry cold, than by warm *drip, drip, drip,* as it is in England. There has been nothing green in the garden, that is to say, above ground, since December: but we have had, all winter, and have now, white cabbages, green savoys, parsnips, carrots, beets, young onions, radishes, white turnips, Swedish turnips, and potatoes; and all these in abundance (except radishes, which were a few to try,) and always at hand at a minute's warning. The modes of preserving will be given in another part of the work. What can any body want *more* than these things in the garden way? However, it would be very easy to add to the catalogue. Apples, quinces, cherries, currants, peaches, *dried in the summer,* and excellent for tarts and pies. Apples in their raw state, as many as we please. My own stock being gone, I have trucked turnips for apples; and shall thus have them, if I please, 'till apples come again on the trees. I give two bushels and a half of Swedish turnips for one of apples: and, indeed, this is on the *last day of March.* I have here stated *facts* whereby to judge of the winter.

April 5. Rain all day. Our cistern and pool full. 7. Warm, but no sun. My first spring operations in gardening are now going on. 10. Fair, but cold. It rained but yesterday, and we are to-day feeding sheep

and lambs with *grain of corn*, and with *oats*, upon *the ground* in the orchard. Judge, then, of the cleanness and convenience of their soil! 19. Cold and raw, with an easterly wind. Just such a wind as that, which, in March, brushes round the corners of the streets of London, and makes the old, muffled-up debauchees hurry home with aching joints. Some hail to-day. 20. Same weather, just the weather to give drunkards the "blue devils." 24. Warm night, warm and fair day. And here I close my journal; for, I am in haste to get my manuscript away; and there now wants only *ten days* to complete the year.

The above copious extract from Mr. Cobbett's Journal of his *Year's Residence in America* will give a pretty tolerable account of the industrious manner in which he passed his time. It must be remembered, also, that he wrote a *Register* every week during the whole of his stay in America, and forwarded it to England to be published; beside many other matters of the most importance, and which he could not neglect.

One morning in the summer of 1817, Mr. Cobbett was visited by a Mr. Fearon; this man went into the hall and introduced himself. (It is necessary to relate this incident because this very person, soon after coming back to England published a book on America, containing some very dirty and false remarks concerning Mr. Cobbett.) He breakfasted with Mr. Cobbett: told them an odd story about having slept in a

blackwoman's hut for sixpence, though there are excellent taverns at every two miles along the road. He told them, besides, something about his being an envoy from a *host of families* in London, to look out for a place of settlement in America; but he took special care not to name any one of those families, though Mr. Cobbett asked him to do it. At first, they took him to be a sort of spy. Mr. William Cobbett took him for a shop-keeper's clerk; Mr. Cobbett took him for a tailor; for he observed that he carried his elbow close to his sides, and his arms, below the elbow, in a horizontal position. It came out that he had been with BUCHANAN, Castlereagh's Consul at New York. He asked some very silly questions about the *prices of land, cattle,* and other things, which were answered very shortly. He then asked Mr. Cobbett's *advice* about the families emigrating; the answer was this:—"Every thing I can say, in such a case, is to *discourage* the enterprize. If Englishmen come here, let them come individually, and sit down amongst the natives: no other plan is rational."

Some time after this Mr. Cobbett heard that this man spent his time, or great part of it, in New York, amongst the idle and dissolute young Englishmen, whose business and extravagance had put them in a state to make them unnoticed by respectable people. A pretty fellow, to be sure to write a description of America. What could such a man know about America? He kept no house; he had no being in any

neighbourhood; he never had any circle of acquaintances amongst the people; he never was a guest under any of their roofs; he knew nothing of their manners, or their characters; yet this very man had written a book abusing America and Americans in the grossest manner. But here is the rub:—it is Mr. FEARON'S account of his visit to Mr. Cobbett, exactly in the following words:—"*A Visit to Mr. Cobbett.*—Upon arriving at Mr. Cobbett's gate, my feelings, in walking along the path which led to the residence of this celebrated man are difficult to describe. The idea of a person self-banished, leading an isolated life in a foreign land; a path rarely trod, *fences in ruins, the gate broken, a house mouldering to decay*, added to much awkwardness of feeling on my part, calling upon an entire stranger, produced in my mind feelings of thoughtfulness and melancholy. I would fain almost have returned without entering the wooden mansion, imagining that its possessor would exclaim, 'What intruding fellow is here coming to break in upon my pursuits!' But these difficulties ceased almost with their existence. A female servant (an English woman) informed me that her master was from home, attending at the county court. Her language was natural enough for a person in her situation; she pressed me to walk in, being quite certain *that I was her countryman;* and she was *so delighted to see an Englishman*, instead of those nasty *guessing Yankees*. Following my guide through the kitchen,

the floor of which, she asserted, was inbedded with two feet of dirt when Mr. Cobbett came there—(it had been previously in the occupation of *Americans)* I was conducted to a front parlour, which contained but a *single chair* and several trunks of sea-clothes. Mr. Cobbett's first question on seeing me was, 'Are you an American, Sir?' then, what are my objects in the United States? Was I acquainted with the friends of liberty in London? How long had I left?' &c. He was immediately familiar. I was pleasingly disappointed with the general tone of his manners. Mr. Cobbett *thinks meanly of the American people,* but spoke highly of the constitution of their government. He does not advise persons in respectable circumstances to emigrate, even in the present state of England. In his opinion a family who can barely live upon their property, will more consult their happiness by not removing to the United States. He almost laughs at Mr. Birkbeck's settling in the western country. This being the first time I had seen this well-known character, I viewed him with no ordinary degree of interest. A print by Bartolozzi, executed in 1801, conveys a correct outline of his person. His eyes are small, and pleasingly good-natured. To a French gentleman present, he was attentive; with his sons familiar; to his servants, easy, but to all, in his tone and manner, resolute and determined. He feels no hesitation in praising himself, and evidently believes that he is eventually destined to be the Atlas of the British nation. His faculty in relating anecdotes is

amusing. Instances when we meet. My impressions of Mr. Cobbett are, that those who know him would like him if they can be content to submit unconditionally to his dictation. 'Obey me and I will treat you kindly; if you do not I will trample on you,' seemed visible in every word and feature. He appears to feel, in its fullest force the sentiment,

> 'I have no brother, am like no brother:
> 'I am myself alone."

Nearly every sentence of the above paragraph is false. What an ungrateful fellow, after the kind reception he met with at Mr. Cobbett's house. To prove that this hireling's account of "*A Visit to Mr. Cobbett*" is untrue, the "English-woman" shall speak for herself:

"I remember, that, about a week after I came to Hyde Park, in 1817, a man came to the house in the evening, when Mr. Cobbett was out, and that he came again next morning. I never knew or asked what countryman he was. He came to the back door. I first gave him a chair in the back-room; but, as he was a slippery-looking young man, and as it was growing late, my husband thought it was best to bring him down into the kitchen, where he staid till he went away. I had no talk with him. I could not know what condition Mr. Cobbett found the house in, for I did not come here 'till the middle of August. I never heard whether the gentleman that lived here before

Mr. Cobbett, was an American, or not. I never in my life said a word against the people or the country: I am very glad I came to it; I am doing very well in it; and have found as good and kind friends amongst the Americans, as I ever had in all my life.

MARY ANN CHURCHER.

Hyde Park, 8th January, 1819.

Mrs. Churcher (Mr. Cobbett's servant at that time) said he looked like an *Exciseman*, and her husband exclaimed:—"Why, you fool, they don't have any Exciseman and such fellows here." Mr. Cobbett never was at a *county court* in America in his life. He was out shooting at the time. As to the house, he never entered a better. The path, so far from being trackless was as beaten as the highway. A gentleman of the name of CROW, an Englishman, lived there before Mr. Cobbett. But only think of *dirt two feet deep*, in a kitchen! All is false. The house was built by Judge Ludlow. It is large, and very sound and commodious. The avenues before it, at that time, were most beautiful. The orchard, the fine shade and fine grass all about the house, made the whole a subject worthy of admiration. A hearty, unostentatious welcome from Mr. Cobbett and his sons. A breakfast such, probably, as the fellow has never had since. The man was not in the house *half an hour* in the morning. Judge, then what he could know of the manners and character of Mr. Cobbett. However, his attempt to injure Mr. Cobbett, like all other attempts of the

same description failed to have the desired effect.

We have now come to the period of Mr. Cobbett's difference with Sir F. Burdett. On the 13th of Sept. 1817, he wrote a Letter from Long Island on the extraordinary conduct of Sir Francis, during the preceding winter. But, to give the whole history of this "strange piece of inconsistency" as it has been termed we must begin at the beginning. Mr Cobbett's imprisonment, which ended in 1812; peace following close at the heels of this imprisonment; giving up the proprietorship of the *Register*, in order to screen himself, caused him to determine on selling his land, and every thing else; and on beginning the world afresh. This determination he communicated to Sir Francis. A Mr. Bosville, knowing his state, lent him, and finally gave him *a thousand pounds*, and he proposed to BURDETT, that he should give him two thousand pounds, to which Sir Francis assented. While they were talking about this, the affair about *the child and the lady* came out; and Mr. Cobbett heard Burdett's explanation. On a Sunday, while this really miserable story was circulating in the papers, Mr. and Mrs. Millard, then straw-hat manufacturers in the Strand, went to see Mr. Cobbett and his wife, who was then with him in Newgate. Mrs. Millard asked Mr. Cobbett what was "this story about Sir Francis Burdett and the child," and how he came first to give and then to demand back the money. The matter was explained. When the lady went away his wife went to

the room door with her, and having shut it very gently and very close, she took her husband by the hand, and looked him very seriously in the face—saying "My dear Billy, *pray never tell that story again.*" This, and the manner of saying it, made Mr. Cobbett ashamed; and it made him resolve to take nothing from "generous" Burdett in the way of gift. He was, at that time, at the prison almost daily, and did Mr. Cobbett the honour to dine with him four or five days in the week. He never positively asked Cobbett to write in his defence on that account; and the £2000 was at last presented to him in the way of *loan*, for which Mr. Cobbett gave him a regular bond, which cost him £4, and sent it to him filled up by himself, in order, as Sir Francis requested, that nobody might know anything about the matter, but their two selves! The next time he visited Mr. Cobbett, he took it out of his pocket, and said "Think nothing of this, Cobbett; it shall never rise in judgment against you." Mr. Cobbett thanked him, but said he hoped to be able duly to pay it.

Amongst his creditors was, a Mr. JAMES SWANN, of Ensham, near Oxford, a paper-maker, and a most worthy man. Burdett, in those his democratic days, had, through Mr. Cobbett or Wright, his clerk, become acquainted with Mr. SWANN, and had visited him at his house in Oxfordshire. He knew of Mr. Cobbett's debt to Mr. Swann, and was told that the £2,000 was wanted for him. When he gave Mr. Cobbett the

check on old Coutts, the banker, he handed it to SWANN; Swann went and got the money, and placed it to his credit.

The £700 the generous soul lent him early in 1816, at the time when he proposed to sell all off and pay him, went to pay some debt. The £300 was a curious affair. It had been got from Sir Francis by Wright, in the winter or spring of 1810; and Burdett, in 1812, brought it against Mr. Cobbett. With this Wright, Mr. Cobbett had a long account to settle. An *arbitration* was held in Newgate; Mr. Cooke, of Lincoln's Inn, was the arbitrator. Burdett, on his *oath*, declared, that he lent the money to Wright for Mr. Cobbett, which Wright denied. However, in consequence of the *oath*, the arbitrator decided, that the money was due from Mr. Cobbett to Burdett, but that, of course, Wright had to pay him the money. It was a promissory note given by Wright to Burdett without any mention of Mr. Cobbett. Amidst the confusion attending his flight to Long Island, this note given up to him by Burdett, was mislaid; but having found it there, it was sent home to Mr. White, solicitor, Essex-street, Strand, to get Burdett to endorse it, to get the money from Wright, and to pay it to Burdett. But Burdett having got the note, never returned it to Mr. White; and lawyer Scarlett in the libel trial of Wright *versus* Cobbett, in 1820, (Burdett sitting in court), said that the note was cancelled.

This Wright published Mr. Cobbett's private let-

ters (of which we shall say more by and bye) to serve Burdett in his election of 1818, and brought a whole bundle of them into court in 1820.

Now, mark, this money was lent by generous Burdett to Wright at the time when Burdett was writing his *tower-pamphlet*. One Howell, a little lawyer, whom Mr. Cobbett was employing on the State Trials, furnished the Statesman with *his law;* Wright contributed the greater part of the *literary* talent. The great affair was shown to Mr. Cobbett, who, finding it so monstrously dull and pointless, proposed the putting of *an introduction* to it. At the legislator's request Mr. Cobbett wrote that part, and this work brought Sir Francis to the Tower. How he got out of the Tower, all the world knows.

Between 1809 and 1815, both inclusive, Mr. Cobbett had performed not less than a hundred journies from Botley to London and back, for no other purpose than that of assisting and upholding Sir Francis; each journey costing him (always in post-chaise) about eleven or twelve pounds; for at his house, Mr. Cobbett never ate or drank but twice in all his life, and never but once, out of hundreds of times, saw any part of his family, though he fed so many, many times at Mr. Cobbett's table in Newgate. Mr. Cobbett subscribed £20 in his own name towards his first election for Westminster, and £50 in five other names, besides writing placards and hand-bills and addresses. It cost Mr. Cobbett many sums for hust-

ings, besides *writing his speeches,* and the resolutions and petitions. It was in fact, what Mr. Cobbett had done in support of him that enraged the government, and that was the *real cause* of the ruinous sentence; for they knew that without Mr. Cobbett Sir Francis would be nothing. But when he had got into the Tower what did Mr. Cobbett do? Did he desert him? and he had none of his money then, at any rate. Mr. Cobbett came to London on purpose to uphold him. His Westminster Committee met to consider of what should be done. They had resolved to abandon him; and, before they separated, Mr. Cobbett, along with a friend, prevailed on them to present to him an address full of praise of his conduct, which address Mr. Cobbett drew up, this brought others in the same strain from all parts of the kingdom. It would require a good large volume to contain the facts that Mr. Cobbett collected for him, the notes that he made for his speeches; the various things that he wrote to uphold him. Two particularly we shall mention. His sensible speech on the currency, Mr. Cobbett *wrote out for him,* and then published it and praised it *as his,* which was, indeed Mr. Cobbett's constant practice. In 1812, he moved the answer to the King's Speech, or rather, the Regent's; and made a long speech, which brought plaudits from every part of the country. *Mr. Cobbett wrote the answer* and the speech; and the former was copied by Burdett's own daughter, that Mr. Cobbett's hand might not appear, and that the secret should not

become public. Nay, these were published in a pamphlet, by subscription, and Mr. Cobbett himself *was the greatest subscriber*. These are things, indeed, which Mr. Cobbett would scorn to have related, under any other circumstances. It seems that Sir Francis Burdett left nothing undone that he thought had a tendency to injure Mr. Cobbett. He wrote Sir Francis a letter from America, containing an assertion, that a man, against whom ruinous laws had been singly pointed, was, by the law of nations, exonerated from obligations by which men, *not so singled out*, were bound; but, at the same time, saying, that he *would not avail himself of that principle*, but would pay every one as fast as he could earn the money. Sir Francis kept the letter out of sight, published an answer to it, misrepresenting its meaning. Mr. Cobbett sent a copy of the same letter to Mr. Timothy Brown, to whom he owed a good deal. Did *he* cavil at it? No! He hastened to Mr. Cobbett on his arrival in London, though then bandaged up for the gout; took him to his house; and brought on his bankruptcy in the most friendly manner. He wrote the *same letter* to Mr. Tipper, a paper-maker, to whom he really owed £3,000, and with whom he was but very slenderly acquainted. Without a farthing of dividend (for he had not a penny) he signed his certificate at the first possible moment; and he actually gave Mr. Cobbett a pound note and a few shillings, that he might, for form's sake, have *something* to sur-

render to the commissioners: and in justice to those commissioners it must be said, that they, seeing a great crowd in Guildhall, staring at Mr. Cobbett, behaved towards him in a manner that showed the best of feelings; put no questions to him, dismissed him in a minute, and very kindly shook him by the hand when he went away.

Every one, even the bitterest political enemy; every one felt, but Burdett. The Old Lord Chancellor, though he had advocated the bills that had ruined him, signed his certificate *out of rule*:—"It is too late," said the officer: "his Lordship will not sign any more until such a day." Mr. Cobbett wrote his name upon a bit of paper, and begged him just to show it the Chancellor. When he came out, he smiled with surprise, and said, "His Lordship *will* sign it." Every soul but that of the envious Burdett was softened. He knew that as soon as Mr. Cobbett arrived in America, he should expose first his urging on, and then his abandonment of, the Reformers, in February, 1817; and, therefore, the moment Mr. Cobbett was gone he put forth the story of the £3,000 with the view of blunting the expected attack; and, in 1818, he put forth his answer to Mr. Cobbett's letter in the hope of making him so odious as to prevent him from ever seeing England again. Here were the real motives; and from first to last his conduct towards Mr. Cobbett has been without a parallel. But, compared with his conduct at Mr. Cobbett's flight from

the dungeons, all the rest sinks into nothingness. There was Mrs. Cobbett with her daughters, two of them very small, in a lodging in London, the mother ready to be confined, and the newspapers had told him that the *bailiffs* had put them out of the house in which some of them had been born, and in which they had all been so happy! There she was, her husband and two sons on the seas, and she about to encounter the perils of child-birth, always great to her; and this was the moment that Burdett, with all the servile press at his nod, chose to stab her to the heart by publicly proclaiming her husband to be a fraudulent man, that had run off with a parcel of his money! However she was consoled by the most kind and attentive conduct of Lord and Lady Radnor, who, as soon as they found out the lodging, visited, and upheld her; an act which imprinted gratitude on the hearts of the whole family.

One of his objects, even from his first knowing Mr. Cobbett, was to keep him out of Parliament. Mr. Cobbett always knew this; but he held him up, because he was in Parliament, and Mr. Cobbett was *not;* and because he preferred the good that he hoped to do through Sir Francis to the doing of no good at all. Therefore, he upheld him, while he despised his niggardliness and selfish ambition.

In 1810, when he had come out of the Tower he would have quitted politics altogether if Mr. Cobbett would have done it. Sir Francis made an attempt to

do this by telling him, that Lord Thanet had, when he visited him in the Tower, said, "When I quitted this place, Burdett, I went to my farm, and *you will do the same;* and, added Burdett, "*I would do it,* COBBETT, *if you would.*" The proposal on the part of Mr. Cobbett was treated with ridicule.

Sir Francis volunteered his offer to subscribe towards Mr. Cobbett's election, in 1824. Seeing a determination on the part of the people to send Mr. Cobbett to Parliament, he was afraid he would make a stand for Westminster; he wrote to Richard Gurney of Norwich, authorising him to say, that he (Burdett) would subscribe £500, and that he did not care who knew it. Gurney read this letter to some gentlemen very intimate with Mr. Cobbett, and who, as was very natural, besought Mr. Cobbett to let Sir Francis alone, and the affair dropped.

In 1826, the general election came, (and along with it the panic) a subscription was set on foot to return Mr. Cobbett, and the contest at Preston followed. And what did Sir Francis do? He now wrote to Colonel Johnstone, to say, that he would subscribe towards obtaining Mr. Cobbett a seat. He afterwards verbally *promised* him that he would do it; but seeing Mr. Cobbett sticking at Preston; seeing *Westminster safe,* he never subscribed a farthing! People must now judge for themselves.*

* The following circumstance, relative to the conduct of

We shall now turn to the doings at the Westminster Election in 1818. Previous to the election, a meeting of the Electors of Westminster was held for the purpose of calling upon some proper person to become a candidate to represent them in Parliament. At this meeting the Electors exhibited a proof of their

Sir F. Burdett, will decide the character of the Baronet, though every thing else should fail; and will assist in proving that Mr. Cobbett was not the only person that found fault with his conduct:—

It is well known that one of the celebrated Parodies for which Mr. Hone was prosecuted, was sent by Sir Francis to him for publication. Mr. Hone was dragged from his family and his business, and immured in the King's Bench Prison for a very considerable period. For several days he laid stretched on a sick bed in this court, and exposed to the repeated ill-treatment of the Judge. Sir Francis was well acquainted with all this, he moreover knew the distressed situation in which Mr. Hone's family were placed, and yet this *humane friend of the oppressed* never even made the least inquiry after Mr. Hone, or whether he could be any assistance in relieving him from the weight of persecution. At length, the day of trial was fixed, and a more wretched situation than that in which Mr. Hone was placed cannot be conceived. With a wife and family of seven or eight children crowding around him, he had scarcely food to live on, or a bed to lie on, and not a shilling that he could call his own. That all doubt as to Sir Francis Burdett's knowledge of the matter might be removed, a friend of Mr. H. wrote to him and described his situation in the most affecting terms. To this no answer was returned. But when Mr. Hone had defeated the Harpies of the law, *when there was applause to be gained by appearing to patronize him*—mark the difference! So eager was he to make himself popular by associating his name with a man who had conquered the ministry, that he even condescended to play the second fiddle on the occasion.

independence. It proved that they were neither to be alarmed by clamour, or deluded by sophistry. The virulent manner in which Mr. Hunt was treated at a dinner, called Sir Francis Burdett's, only made the electors more than ever determined to support him.

The following Resolution was proposed to the meeting and carried unanimously:—"That it is the opinion of the present meeting, that Henry Hunt, Esq. from his known and openly declared attachment to the principles of Annual Parliaments, and Universal Suffrage, and from his undaunted firmness and active zeal in supporting the Rights and Liberties of his fellow-country men, is eminently deserving of the proud and enviable distinction of being returned one of the Representatives for this respectable and populous city." Immediately after this meeting Mr. Hunt published an address to the Electors, thanking them for the very flattering reception he experienced in offering himself as a candidate; and stated that his course was plain and direct—that he disdained all subterfuge or studied ornaments of speech—that he was for universal suffrage and annual parliaments—and that he was opposed to all laws that had a tendency to curtail the liberties of the people, and oppress and starve the poor. Now, this fearless beginning—this earnest conduct of the Westminster Electors and Mr. Hunt, made Sir Francis and his friends quake with fear. They resorted to every means however false and dishonourable to foil these attempts to return Mr.

Hunt; and other means resorted to at this crisis were the cause of a *difference* which every good and honest reformer has had sufficient cause to lament. We mean the difference between Mr. Cobbett and Mr. Hunt. We shall give the whole history of this affair from beginning to end.

Mr. Hunt's first personal interview with Mr. Cobbett was in the year 1805. The first time Mr. Hunt went to London, he determined to call upon and have an interview with a man who afforded him so much pleasure by his writings, and who had given him so much useful information as to politics and political economy. Mr. Cobbett lived in Duke-street, Westminster, where, on his arrival, Mr. Hunt sent in his name. He was shown into a room unfurnished, without even a chair in it. After waiting some time, the great political writer appeared; a tall robust man, with a florid face, his hair cut quite close to his head, and himself dressed in a blue coat and scarlet cloth waistcoat. Mr. Hunt introduced himself as a gentleman from Wiltshire, who had taken a lead at the county meeting, the particulars of which he had forwarded to him. Mr. Cobbett addressed him very briefly, and very humbly, saying that "we must persevere, and we should bring all the scoundrels to justice." Mr. Hunt was not asked to sit down; but that might have arisen from there being no other seat in the room than the floor.

He departed, not at all pleased with the interview.

He had made up his mind for a very different sort of man; and, indeed, he was very much disappointed by his appearance and manners, and mortified at the cool reception which he met with. He thought that of all the men he ever saw, Mr. Cobbett was the least likely for him to become enamoured of his society. The result was, nevertheless, quite the reverse; they lived and acted together for many years with the most perfect cordiality; and there never were two men that ever lived, that more sincerely, honestly, and zealousy, advocated liberty than Mr. Hunt and Mr. Cobbett. It was, however, some years after this interview, before they became intimate.

He was a constant reader of Cobbett's Register, and although, as we have said before, he had been rather disgusted with the man at his first interview with him, yet he was quite enraptured with the beautiful productions of his pen, dictated by his powerful mind.

In the year 1808, Sir. Francis Burdett was returned to Parliament by the electors of Westminster; Mr. Hunt as well as Mr. Cobbett, was, at this time, amongst the Baronet's most enthusiastic admirers. This victory gave new life and spirits to the friends of liberty all over the kingdom. Mr. Hunt proposed a public dinner in Bristol, to celebrate the joyful event. At this dinner a congratulatory address was voted to Sir Francis Burdett, which Mr. Hunt, as chairman, forwarded to him. Sir Francis returned a

very polite answer, in which he professed to be very highly flattered with the compliment they had paid him at Bristol. Mr. Hunt sent copies of their proceedings to Mr. Cobbett, who lived at that time at Botley, expressing a wish, if he approved of them, that he would insert them in his Political Register; he however, neither inserted them nor returned any answer; but, as it since appeared, he wrote a letter to WRIGHT, who was a sort of hanger-on at the Westminster Committee, which letter at the general election in 1818, was read upon the hustings by one Cleary, an attorney's clerk, or rather a pettifogging writer to an attorney in Dublin. This person was hired by the committee of Sir Francis Burdett to do his office, to shew that Mr. COBBETT entertained a different opinion of Mr. Hunt in the year 1808, before they were acquainted with each other, from that which he entertained of him in the year 1818, after he had known him and had acted with him for a number of years.

In the memoirs of HUNT, written by himself in the year 1820, we find that he really believed this letter to be written by Mr. Cobbett, as will be seen from the following observations, extracted from vol. 2:—"What induced Mr. Cobbett to write this letter, or what were his motives, are best known to himself. But, the contents of the letter were as false, as the style and language were gross, and the sentiments it contained illiberal and unmanly. Mr. Cobbett had at that time spoken to me but once; and as I was

never in the habit of flattering any one, or disguising my opinions, I can easily conceive that he had, from this first interview, formed personally as unfavourable an opinion of me as I had of him. But he knew nothing of me or my connections. All that he could have known of me was, that I was a zealous advocate of that cause which he then professed to espouse. Therefore, what were his motives for writing this letter must remain with himself. However, Mr. Jennings, and the gentlemen who then composed the Westminster committee, treated his advice with that contempt which a malignant and unmanly act deserved; for they opened a communication with me immediately. As to the letter, however, it was of such a nature, that they thought it advisable to lay it by, to be produced upon some future occasion, and that occasion was the one which I have named. Now I must intreat the reader to give me credit when I say, that I never suffered the production of this letter to operate upon me, so as to shake the private friendship I had with Mr. Cobbett. What he wrote of me, or whatever opinion he entertained of me, ten years back, and previously to his knowing any thing of me, however unjust that opinion might have been, however coarsely or illiberally that opinion might have been expressed, and however basely that circumstance might, after a lapse of ten or eleven years, have been used by a contemptible hired agent of Sir Francis Burdett, upon the public hustings at an election, I never suffered it

for one moment to have the slightest influence upon my public or private conduct towards Mr. Cobbett. But what I was grieved and hurt at, was, that Mr. Cobbett should have made me his dupe, by writing home to me from America, to assure me, that the letter read by Cleary upon the hustings at Westminster was a *forgery;* and not only sending me a copy of the New York paper, wherein he had declared this letter to be a forgery, but *authorizing* ME, nay, *urging* ME to pronounce it to be a forgery, which, *upon the faith of his word*, I did, at a meeting at the Crown and Anchor, where Cleary produced the letter. At this treatment I was hurt; I had good reason to be offended; but I never complained of it. The shyness and the dispute which had arisen between Mr. Cobbett and myself has arisen from a very different cause. But, for my own part, I am happy that this shyness did not happen while Mr. Cobbett was in prison, but while Henry Hunt is incarcerated in his dungeon. Although I cannot accuse myself of having ever done any thing to merit this conduct from Mr. Cobbett, yet I shall never cease to lament it, as an injury to that cause in which we had so long drawn together."

From the foregoing extract it is quite evident Mr. Hunt believed *the letter* to have been written by Cobbett. The letter alluded to is the one read by a person of the name of Cleary, upon the hustings at the Westminster election in 1818, Mr. Hunt being

one of the candidates for the city at that time :—

" *Botley*, 20*th April*, 1808.

" All the gentlemen whom I met with are loud in Sir Francis Burdett's praise. His motion about the cashiering of officers has gained him thousands of friends. So bent was I for calling for a purgation of that damned house, that I was resolved to petition alone, if any one would have presented my petition. The nation is heart sick of it. It is impossible for both factions united to calumniate our motives, if we proceed as we ought, and do not mix with men of *bad character*. There is one *Hunt*, the Bristol man—beware of him ! He rides about the country with a w———, the wife of another man, having deserted his own. A sad fellow—have nothing to do with him. Adieu ! WILLIAM COBBETT.

As, soon, however, as Mr. Cobbett received the English papers containing an account of these proceedings, he published to the world that this letter was a forgery, and that it was written by a man who he well knew to have been guilty of forging his writing and name, for fraudulent purposes, many times : and that it had been obtained from that man to serve the basest of purposes.

This circumstance, certainly affected Mr. Hunt's opinion of Cobbett, with whom he had been acting for nearly ten years—and by whom he was recommended to the people of Westminster in the strongest terms.

Mr. Cobbett was more than ever determined to return to England—and that too as soon as prudent; these tricks of his enemies—these intrigues made him resolve to return to his native country, and to bring these base fellows to an account. Burdett feared his return, and all his "*rump*" quaked with the idea of receiving a chastisement from a man so capable of giving it.

At the latter end of the year 1819, he made preparations for another sea voyage, and without delay proceeded on board a ship bound for his native home. On the 3rd December, his return was celebrated by a public dinner at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, Strand, London.

In January, 1821, his family, after having been scattered about like a covey of partridges that had been sprung and shot at, got once more together, in a hired lodging at Brompton; and their delight and mutual caresses, and their tears of joy, experienced no abatement at their actually finding themselves with ONLY THREE SHILLINGS IN THE WHOLE WORLD, and at his having to borrow from a friend the money to pay for the paper and print of the then next Saturday's Register.

Shortly after his return the King died; this he had calculated upon; and that a general election would, of course, immediately follow; and this consideration was connected with his return to England; for, had it not been with a hope of getting into Par-

liament, he should not have returned, foreseeing that measures for *stifling the press* would certainly be adopted. But, he calculated upon the chance of getting into Parliament when the King should die. And that, if he succeeded, he would be the means of producing a great effect of some sort or another. Therefore, the moment the King's death was announced, he offered himself for Coventry, where the right of voting was solely in the Freemen. He set off for this city with one of his daughters, going all night (the coldest of the winter) in a post chaise; they breakfasted at Daventry and then proceeded on towards Dunchurch, which is eleven miles from Coventry. Here they were met by messengers, who brought accounts that he would certainly be murdered if he attempted to enter the city. A parcel of men had been made drunk, and received orders to go out, meet him at a bridge, about a mile from the city, and if he refused to return to London, *fling him over the bridge.* While they were deliberating on what course to pursue, a gentleman arrived with intelligence that the opposite party had drawn up rank and file, in the city; that they were marching off with banners, drums, and music; and that they had not reached the outside of the city when Mr. Cobbett's friends sallied forth upon them, took away their banners, staved in their drums, dispersed them in all directions, and set off on their march to meet him. It now became Mr. Cobbett to get on as fast as possible; but the two landlords at

Dunchurch refused to let him have a chaise! In this difficulty, he and his daughter got into a gig, and went on as fast as possible. They were met with friends on the road, with post chaise, into which they got, and were drawn into the city.

The violence resorted to by the opposite party remains without a parallel. Knives, daggers, staves, and every sort of murderous weapons were profusely distributed, amongst a band of hired ruffians. At the close of the first day's poll, Mr. Cobbett was at the head. Mr. Cobbett, not suspecting any attempt against him personally, left the booth, and attempted to get through the crowd; here, however, a band of savages endeavoured to press him down. They gave him many blows in the sides; and, if he had been either a short or a weak man, he must have been pressed under foot, and inevitably killed. With a good deal of difficulty he reached the pavement keeping his feet. He had, when he left the booth, his snuff-box in his right hand. The box is an oblong square, and had then very sharp corners.

The savages pressed him side-ways, he had to fight with his right hand in order to prevent them from getting him down. He had to strike back-handed. One of the sharp corners of the snuff-box, did good service. It cut the noses and eyes of the savages at a famous rate and assisted mainly in securing his safe arrival to the door of a shop. With considerable difficulty and peril he arrived at his inn, which was kept

by a Mr. SERGEANT. The other party seeing Mr. Cobbett's election sure, unless some means were resorted to, immediately set about hiring fellows to keep his voters from coming to the booth; this they did so effectually, with their horrid threats and imprecations, and their brutal usage of them, that he scarce polled a single vote the second day. At the close of the poll on the fourth day, ELLICE and MOORE, the other candidates, were much annoyed by his resolution to keep the poll open another week. They conceived the idea of setting their savages to drive him out of the city. In the evening, about dusk, the ruffians, led on by two or three of their employers made a regular attack upon Mr. Sergeant's house, vowing their resolution to drag Mr. Cobbett out and kill him. They first dashed in the upper room windows; next they pulled down the shutters of the ground floor room. They then broke into the house passage by forcing in the door. Mr. Cobbett expected them up stairs pretty quickly; and while the main body were entering in front, they saw others scaling a wall to get into the house in the rear by the garden.—Mr. Cobbett was very ill with a cold, and was sitting in his bed-room with his daughter. A detachment with Mr. Frank Sergeant at their head, faced the savages in the passage. One or two took station on the top of the stairs, armed with pokers; while Mr. Cobbett in his room, with his daughter, fixed the bedstead in a way to let the door open no wider than to

admit one man only at a time, and stood with a sword to send the first man that attempted to enter to receive the arrears that might be due to him. He had pulled off his coat, and was prepared to give with a clear conscience, as hearty a thrust as ever was given by man. However the siege was put an end to by the arrival of the constables, and tranquility was restored.

After this, Mr. Cobbett went near the booth no more. He could not by his presence, give countenance to any such unfair and disgraceful proceedings. He did nothing more. They, at last, stated that the numbers were as follows:—Edward Ellice, 1474; Peter Moore, 1472; William Cobbett, 517.

To have a seat in Parliament was his most anxious desire. Many were the schemes he resorted to—many were the *Addresses* he wrote to the people, to persuade them to subscribe a sufficient sum of money to qualify him for a seat in the House of Commons. Previous to the election just adverted to, taking place some two or three hundreds of pounds had been subscribed; but this, of course fell far short of the mark. He calculated that it would require ten thousand pounds to provide the legal qualification: and he expected to be indemnified for the great pecuniary sacrifice he would necessarily be compelled to make. His scheme was this, that each county in the kingdom should raise a sum, for the above purpose, proportionate to its population; for instance: the three ridings of the county

of York would subscribe £890.; Rutlandshire, £30; and so on with the other counties. This scheme never succeeded to the full extent, though considerable sums were raised in this way.

This money, and ten times the amount he had certainly earned. No man ever did more good to the cause of freedom—no man ever sacrificed more. And for this reason only, his exertions entitled him to the honour of having a seat in Parliament. But bribery and corruption were carried to such extremes, that to expect such a thing, constituted as the Parliament then was, really seemed ridiculous.

In the year 1826, he made another attempt to get into Parliament. He offered himself as a candidate for Preston, at the General Election of 1826. But, here he also proved unsuccessful, to the mortification of himself, and to the great disappointment of the friends of Parliamentary Reform. The numbers at the close of the poll, were :—Stanley, 2944; Wood, 1974; Burrel, 1653; Cobbett, 995. Still he was not daunted, for he again called upon the people to support his scheme to obtain a seat; again he poured forth his powerful appeals; and again they were answered; though the amount subscribed was not so large as on former occasions. He was now prepared once more to make another attempt, on the first occasion that offered.

Though Mr. Cobbett had not proved successful in his attempts to obtain a seat in the Commons' House of Parliament, in which, it is evident enough, he would have effected great reform and universal good; his exertions in the cause of the people were by no means diminished. If possible he redoubled his exertions. How immense have been his labours! How wonderful his productions! What an energetic mind nature had given him! Nothing disconcerted him. Nothing conquered him. At one time he was so much reduced that he was compelled to give up the *copyright of his English Grammar,* to help to pay his debts; but he afterwards bought it back, and actually gave 1200 sovereigns for it.

One of his works alone, *the Register,* was enough to occupy the whole time of any other man. Ever since January, in the year 1802, to the period of his death in 1835, he continued to write and publish one number every week of this celebrated political work; every one of which, contained more original matter than any other weekly periodical; a work that never failed to prove interesting; a work that has done more to shew to the people of this kingdom the causes of their poverty and misery, and also to point out to them the remedy for those evils, than all the speeches, and all the writings, of all the politicians that England ever produced. Besides, the agriculturists, had in this work a most able and powerful advocate of their rights; he was the champion of the people; he de-

fended the wretched and the oppressed working-classes; he did this at the risk of his own life, more than once. On the 20th of April, 1822, his *Register* was first embellished with Cobbett's well-known insignia of the GRIDIRON, which originated from a prophecy made by Mr. Cobbett, at North Hampstead, Long Island, on the 24th of September, 1819; and is as follows:— "This Bill (Mr. Peel's) was grounded on *current Reports*, of both Houses; it was pased by *unanimous votes* of both Houses; it was, at the close of the Session, a subject of high eulogium in the Speaker's speech to the Regent, and in the Regent's speech to the two Houses: now then, I, William Cobbett, assert, that, if this Bill be carried into full effect, I will give Castlereagh leave to lay me on a *gridiron* and broil me alive, while Sidmouth may stir the coals, and Canning stand by and laugh at my groans."

It must not be imagined that he was only a political writer. We have here to speak of other books than the Register. Books which would form a tolerably good and very useful library. He wrote an English Grammar, which contained a series of fourteen letters addressed to one of his sons; besides "Lessons intended to prevent Statesmen from using false Grammar." It is drawn up in a style so clear, and so interesting, that it is next to impossible that they should be read without producing a correct knowledge of our native language. Of this work more than 100,000 copies have been sold.

Having taught himself the French language, and knowing what were the difficulties, which the student had to overcome in the learning of this language, he wrote a French Grammar, or Plain Instructions for the Learning of French. Like the former, it is a book of *principles,* it is divested of those complicated difficulties which beset the pupil when studying other grammars. He knew well what it was that had bothered and puzzled and retarded him, and he therefore, took care to remove those obstacles, to prevent others experiencing that vexation which he himself experienced. His knowledge of this language was so complete, that the very first thing that he wrote in the shape of a book for the press was a grammar to teach Frenchmen English. And also books on the following subjects:—Cottage Economy; Husbandry; Gardening; on the Usury Laws; on Paper-money; on the Protestant Reformation; on the Law of Turnpikes; and Exercises to his French Grammar; a French and English Dictionary; a Geographical Dictionary; Twelve Sermons; Year's Residence in America; the Woodlands: a treatise on Indian Corn; on the Curse of Paper Money; Rural Rides; Poor Man's Friend; and just before his death he published a small work entitled a Legacy to Labourers, and another, a Legacy to Parsons, of which a number, almost incredible, have been sold. We have not enumerated any thing of the kind as the whole of his works; one of his finest productions (leaving politics aside) was his

Advice to Young Men, a book which no young man should be without. It is the best guide a young man can have to conduct him through the intricate paths of his worldly career. In his address to a youth we have an example of his own mode of living:—"I ate," he says, "during one whole year, one mutton chop every day. Being once in town, with one son (then a little boy) and a clerk, while my family was in the country, I had during some weeks nothing but legs of mutton; first day, leg of mutton boiled or roasted; second, cold; third, hashed; then, leg of mutton boiled, and so on. When I have been by myself, or nearly so, I have always proceeded thus: given directions for having every day the same thing, or alternately as above, and every day exactly at the same hour, so as to prevent the necessity of any *talk* about the matter. I am certain that, upon an average, I have not, during my life, spent more than *thirty-five minutes a-day at table*, including all the meals of the day. I like, and I take care to have, good and clean victuals; but if wholesome and clean that is enough. If I find it by chance too coarse for my appetite, I put the food aside, or let somebody do it, and leave the appetite to gather keenness."

In another part of his writings we find a description of the manner in which he reared and educated his children.—"I found time to talk with them, to walk or ride about with them; and when forced to go from home always took one or more with me. You

must be good tempered too with them; they must like your company better than any other person's; they must not wish you away, nor fear your coming back, nor look upon your departure as a holiday. When any business kept me away from the scribbling table, a petition often came, that I would go and talk with the group, and the bearer generally was the youngest, being the most likely to succeed. When I went from home, all followed me to the outer gate, and looked after me, till the carriage or horse was out of sight. At the time appointed for my return, all were prepared to meet me; and if it were late at night, they sat up as long as they were able to keep their eyes open. This kind of parents and this constant pleasure at home, made them not even think of seeking pleasure abroad; and they, thus, were kept from various playmates and early corruption.

"This is an age, too, to teach children to be *trustworthy* and to be *merciful* and *humane*. We lived in a garden of about two acres, partly kitchen-garden with walls, partly shrubbery with trees, and partly grass. There were the peaches, as tempting as any that ever grew, and yet as safe from fingers as if no child were even in the garden. It is not necessary to forbid. The blackbirds, the thrushes, the whitebreasts, and even that very shy bird, the goldfinch, had their nests and bred up their young ones, in great abundance, all about this little spot, constantly the play place of six children; and one of the latter had its nest, and brought up its young ones, in a raspberry bush, within two yards of a

walk, and at the same time that we were gathering the ripe raspberries. We give dogs, and justly, credit for sagacity and memory; but the following two most curious instances, which I should not venture to state, if there were not so many witnesses to the facts, in my neighbours at Botley, as well as in my own family, will show, that birds are not, in this respect, inferior to the canine race. All country people know that the skylark is a very shy bird; that its abode is the open fields; that it settles on the ground only; that it seeks safety in the wideness of space; that it avoids enclosures, and is never seen in gardens. A part of our ground was a grass plat of about forty roods, or a quarter of an acre, which, one year, was left to be mowed for hay. A pair of larks, coming out of the fields, into the middle of a pretty populous village, chose to make their nest in the middle of this spot, and at not more than about thirty-five yards from one of the doors of the house, in which there were about twelve persons living, and six of those, children, who had constant access to all parts of the ground. There we saw the cock rising up and singing, then taking his turn upon the eggs; and by-and-by we observed him cease to sing, and saw them both *constantly engaged in bringing food to the young ones;* no unintelligible hint to the fathers and mothers of the human race, who might before marriage, have taken delight in music. But the time came for mowing the grass! I waited a good many days for the brood to get away; but, at last, I determined on the day; and

if the larks were there still, to leave a patch of grass standing round them. In order not to keep them in dread longer than necessary, I brought three able mowers, who would cut the whole in about an hour, and as the plat was nearly circular, set them to mow round, beginning at the outside. And now for sagacity indeed! The moment the men began to whet their scythes, the two old larks began to flutter over the nest, and to make a great clamour. When the men began to mow, they flew round and round, stooping so low, when near the men, as almost to touch their bodies, making a great clattering at the same time; but before the men had got round with the second swaith, they flew to the nest, and away they went, young ones and all, across the river, at the foot of the ground, and settled in the long grass in my neighbour's orchard.

"The other instance relates to a House-marten. It is well known that these birds build there nests under the cases of inhabited houses, and sometimes under those of door porches; but we had one that built its nest *in the hovie*, and upon the top of a common door-case, the door of which opened into a room out of the main passage into the house. Perceiving the marten had begun to build its nest here, we kept the front door open in the day time: but were obliged to fasten it at night. It went on, had eggs, young ones, and the young ones flew. I used to open the door in the morning early, and then the birds carried on their affairs till

night. The next year the MARTEN came again, and had another brood in the same place. It found its old nest; and having repaired it, and put it in order, went on again in the former way; and it would, I dare say, have continued to come to the end of its life, if we had remained there so long, notwithstanding there were six healthy children in the house, making just as much noise as they pleased.

"Now what sagacity in those birds to discover that those were places of safety! And how happy must it have made us, the parents, to be *sure*, that our children had thus imbibed habits the contrary of cruelty! For, be it engraved on your heart, *young men*, that whatever appearances may say to the contrary, *cruelty* is always attended with *cowardice*, and also with *perfidy*, when that is called for by the circumstances of the case; and that habitual acts of cruelty to other creatures, will, nine times out of ten, produce, when the power is possessed, cruelty to human beings. The ill-usage of *horses*, and particularly asses, is a grave and just charge against this nation. No other nation on earth is guilty of it to the same extent. Not only by *blows*, by privation are we cruel towards useful docile and patient creatures; and especially towards the last, which is the most docile and laborious of the two, while the food that satisfies it, is of the coarsest and least costly kind, and in quantity so small! In the habitual ill-treatment of this animal, which, in addition to all its labour, has the milk taken from its young ones to administer a

remedy for our ailments, there is something that bespeaks *ingratitude* hardly to be described. In a *Register* that I wrote from Long Island, I said that amongst all things of which I had been bereft, I regretted no one so much as a very diminutive *mare*, on which my children had all, in succession learned to ride. She was become useless for them, and indeed for any other purpose; but the recollection of her was so entwined with so many past circumstances, which at that time my mind conjured up, that I really was very uneasy, lest she should fall into cruel hands. By good luck, she was, a while, turned out on the wide world to shift for herself; and when we got back, and had a place for her to *stand* in, from her native forest we brought her to Kensington, and she is now at Barn-Elm, about twenty-six years old, and I dare say as fat as a mole. Now, not only have I no moral *right* (considering my ability to pay for keep) to deprive her of life; but it would be *unjust* and *ungrateful*, in me, to withhold from her sufficient food and lodging to make life as pleasant as possible while that life lasts.

"In mean while the book learning *crept on* of its own accord, by imperceptible degrees. Children naturally want to be *like* their parents, and to do what they do: the boys following their father, and the girls their mother; and as I was always writing or reading, mine naturally desired to do something in the same way. But, at the same time, they heard no talk from *fools* or *drinkers*: saw me with no idle, gabbling, empty com-

panions; saw no vain and affected coxcombs, and no tawdry and extravagant women; saw no nasty gormandizing; and heard no gabble about play-houses and romances and the other nonsense that fits boys to be lofty loungers and girls to be the ruin of industrious and frugal young men.

"We wanted no stimulants of this sort to *keep our spirits up*: our various pleasing pursuits were quite sufficient for that; and the *book-learning* came among the rest of the pleasures, to which it was, in some sort, necessary. I remember that, one year, I raised a prodigious crop of *fine melons*, under hand-glasses; and I learned how to do it from a gardening book; or, at least, that book was necessary to remind me of the details. Having passed part of an evening in talking to the boys about getting this crop, "Come," said I, "now let us *read the book.*" Then the book came forth, and to work we went, following very strictly the precepts of the book. I read the thing but once, but the eldest boy read it, perhaps, twenty times over; and explained all about the matter to the others. Why here was a *motive!* Then he had to tell the garden-labourer *what to do* to the melons. Now, I will engage, that more was really *learned* by this single *lesson*, than would have been learned by spending, at this son's age, a year at school; and he *happy* and *delighted* all the while. When any dispute arose among them about hunting or shooting, or any other of their pursuits, they, by degrees found out the way of settling it by reference to some

book; and when any difficulty occurred, as to the meaning, they referred to me, who, if at home, *always instantly attended to them* in these matters." In concluding these extracts from *Advice to Young Men* we cannot do better than advise every young man, in whatever station of life he may be placed, to peruse this invaluable work. The time spent in so doing will never be regretted.

Cobbett was, all his life, at war with a certain class of modern political economists. Some darkness and prejudice might mingle in the strife, but it would be difficult to shew that he was *always* wrong; and upon this point, no one has questioned either his sincerity or his consistency. There is now considerable reaction, we believe, in favour of many of his old-fashioned opinions. Where they were erroneous, the error originated in devotedness to his "*order*"—the order of labouring men;—to that, with all his alleged inconsistencies, he was ever thoroughly staunch; and so enlightened, upon the whole, to its true interest, so undeviating in his fealty, to the comfortable cottage, the clean smock-frock, the neat cleanly wife, the healthy rosy children, the cow, the pig, the flitch, the home-baked and home-brewed, and in his own homely comprehensive phrase, "the bellyfull"—that this alone, combined with real services to the working man, would stamp him an eminent benefactor of his species. A very great proportion of his voluminous writings have been directly devoted to the improvement of this important class;

yet he has often contrived to make these writings as amusing as a lively fiction. As the surest foundation of *moral* and social amelioration, he ever contended for the labourer having sufficient, and even abundant and *comfortable* food, clothing, and shelter. Passing the rising plantations of one of the NEW RICH Barings—whose lady was reputed to be very charitable to her poor neighbours, though she required them to adopt her own notions with regard to religion—he remarks: "I do not say, that they are not perfectly sincere themselves, and that their wishes are not the best that can possibly be; but of this I am very certain, that, by pursuing this principle of action, where they make one good man or woman, they will make one hundred hypocrites. It is not little books that make a people good; that can make them moral; that can restrain them from committing crimes. I believe that books of any sort, never yet had that tendency. Sir Thomas does, I dare say, think me a very wicked man, since I aim at the destruction of the funding-system, and what he would call a robbery of what he calls the public creditor; and yet, God help me! I have read books enough, and, amongst the rest, a great part of religious tracts. Amongst the labouring people, the first thing you have to look after is, common honesty, speaking the truth, and refraining from thieving; and, to secure these, the labourer must have his belly full and be free from fear; and this bellyfull must come to him from out of his wages, and not from benevolence of

any description. Such being my opinion, I think Sir Thomas Baring would do better; that he would discover more real benevolence, by using the influence which he must naturally have in his neighbourhood, to prevent a diminution in the wages of labour."

On the 7th of July, 1831, Mr Cobbett was tried on an indictment laid by the Attorney-General, Sir Thomas Denman, for a libel exciting discontent in the minds of the labourers in husbandry and exciting them to acts of violence, and to the destroying of corn-stacks, machinery, &c. He defended in person, against the Attorney-General and his *"dirty bill of indictment,"* in a most splendid manner.

The Attorney-General instead of stating the *charge* to the jury ran off the point in hand, which was smartly objected to by

Mr. COBBETT, who asked, Is it not proper, my Lord, that the Attorney-General, in stating to the Jury the case against me, should confine himself to the charge contained in the indictment?

Lord TENTERDEN replied, He will state it by and by.

Mr. COBBETT. I beg pardon, he is stating what is not in the indictment: he says that I am charged with publishing so and so.

Lord TENTERDEN. That is the argument, I cannot stop it.

Mr. COBBETT. I am charged with intending to do so and so, but I am not charged with that which has a tendency to do so and so.

Lord TENTERDEN. I do not understand it. Pray, Sir, be quiet, you will have your opportunity of addressing the jury by-and-by.

Mr COBBETT. I beg that the indictment may be read.

Lord TENTERDEN. It will be read at the proper time.

Mr. COBBETT. Will it be read before I go into my defence?

Lord TENTERDEN. It will be read at the proper season.

Mr. COBBETT. When is the proper season?

Lord TENTERDEN. This is not it.

Mr. COBBETT. I beg to be excused. The Attorney-General, has, in the indictment, denominated me "a labourer;" being a labourer, I am entitled to indulgence.

Lord TENTERDEN. This is not the time for you to address the Jury. I cannot hear you now.

Mr. COBBETT. Being a "labourer," and ignorant of the law, I did not know.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL resumed. You will see the propriety of a remark which I took the liberty of making a few minutes ago. You will see, from what has now passed, the spirit in which this defence is to be carried on by the gentleman.

Mr. COBBETT. A labourer, if you please.

Lord TENTERDEN. If you will not sit down, Sir, I must try the cause in your absence.

Mr. COBBETT. Unless the Attorney-General call

me a "*labourer*" I must protest every time.

Lords Grey, J. Russell, and Brougham were subpœned by Mr. Cobbett, the latter of whom, on being examined, by him, gave a splendid sample of "*non mi ricordo*" evidence. The Attorney-General got the worst of it, and the whigs experienced such discomfiture as never again to be able to return to the charge.

Thus did Mr. Cobbett escape the dreadful vengeance that had been prepared for him by his Whig persecutors. That his innocence of any guilty intention to excite the agricultural labourers to acts of lawless violence, was clearly proved must be evident to any one who has carefully read his able defence. Nay, even Lord Brougham's evidence goes at once to destroy every charge that had been brought against him, for if he really had been the seditious and restless spirit represented in the indictment, surely his Lordship would have been the last person to have been in treaty with him for the re-publication of a work written by the defendant, at a period when his political opinions were exactly the same that they were when the alleged libel was sent out to the world. But the whole charge was too trumpery to be maintained; the honest portion of the jury resolved to stand between an oppressed man and the vengeance of the law, and Mr. Cobbett escaped the heavy doom that the malice of his enemies had prepared for him.

In the following year (1832) the Bill for the Re-

form of Parliament having passed the two Houses, and obtained the assent of the King, it was a natural consequence that a dissolution should take place, and a seat in the Legislature, the great object of Mr. Cobbett's ambition, now seemed certain. After the rising of Parliament the registration of the new constituency under the Reform Bill, and the other preparations for a general election, were proceeded with. Mr. Cobbett and other candidates were already in the field, and their canvasses concluded while the registration was going on. Although numerous indeed were the questions which arose on the interpretation of the act, and the difficulties which occurred in proving value, the professional gentlemen, to whom this judicial duty was entrusted, made it in general a rule to run the chance of admitting a man who had no franchise, rather than exclude a man who, at bottom, might have a good one. It was only in cases where an election was to be contested, that the particular claims were examined with much accuracy. The opposing candidates then became opposing litigants, and the process of registration was in some instances drawn out to a great length.

At length the registration of the new constituency having been completed all over the kingdom, Parliament, which had been prorogued by commission on the 10th of October, was dissolved on the 3d of December; and the first general election under the Reform Act took place. The writs were made returnable on the 29th January, 1833. In regard to the mere machinery

of the measure, it worked much more smoothly than had been anticipated. Even in the most populous places, the polling was concluded within the two days allowed by the act; and no time was expended in examining votes. The name was in the register, and that was sufficient.

At this time there were three parties in the field. First came the Ministerial candidates; next came the Tories, now called Conservatives, who thought ministers had already gone too far; and last, but not least, were the Radicals, who were determined to spur ministers on to go a great deal farther in their task of reforming public abuses.

The elections went of course in by far the greater number of instances, in favour of the ministerial candidates, or of candidates who professed the same general views, and declared their adherence to a reforming ministry. Thus the ministerial candidates obtained a majority which, if increased by the Radical members, who were willing to go all lengths with them in one direction, was overwhelming, and which, even without them, seemed to be as decisive a majority as a minister could wish. The professed Radicals stood principally for the new-created boroughs, where a large constituency seemed to offer them the best safeguard against the bribery and corruption of the vanquished Tories.

Mr. Cobbett started for Manchester, but having failed there was returned by the honest men of Oldham, and thus, after years of labour and toil in behalf of the

people, he at length found himself placed in that honourable situation to which he had so frequently aspired. He now felt that he could serve the cause for which he had laboured so incessantly, and resolving to suffer no opportunity to pass by that might prove his ardent love for liberty and free institutions, he prepared to take his seat in the reformed House of Commons.

There is little doubt, however, that his death is in some measure attributable to the additional fatigue and labour devolved upon him in the discharge of his parliamentary duties. In the House of Commons he has somewhat disappointed the expectations that most of his admirers formed of him. He despised the conventionalities that are held sacred in the representative assembly, and had neither the temper nor the tact necessary to constitute a ready and effective debater. Beyond two or three good set speeches upon the Stamp Duties, the Excise, the Assessed Taxes, and the horrible spy system in the Metropolitan Police force, his parliamentary career has been a comparative blank. Not that he has not said many good things at the table of the house, that no one else could or would have said, but that they were altogether unadapted for the assembly in which they were spoken. They excited our admiration of his talent, and our regret that he had not had a seat in the house some thirty years earlier. How different he was a lecturer many of our readers well know. The ease of his manner, the

mastery over his subject, the purity and strength of his diction, the power of his argumentation, and the felicity of his illustrations, rendered him, in this order of public speaking, the greatest man since the time of Demosthenes. We are not sorry, however, that he has been tried in Parliament, nor are we disappointed that the trial was a failure as to any influence of the House of Commons. The house was not pure enough, nor Mr. Cobbett young enough, to conform himself to their somewhat eccentric modes of proceeding.

As the meeting of the first reformed parliament approached, public attention was directed with some anxiety towards its probable temper and deliberations. The result of the general election, as we have already seen, was decidedly in favour of the Whig ministry. The great majority of the house consisted of members inclined to follow and support them; and as there seldom could be an occasion on which the two divisions of the opposition, differing more from each other than either of them did from the ministry; could be expected to unite, every thing seemed to promise that the government would be omnipotent in Parliament. Their measures might fall far short of what was expected and desired by the lovers of yet more rigid reforms, and might go far beyond what the Conservatives deemed safe or convenient; but the ministers were sure of being joined by the one of those parties to overcome the resistance or check the fervour of the other. To one danger, indeed, ministers were exposed—their

performances must either fall greatly short of what they had promised, and produce disappointment, or they must throw themselves, to support their popularity, into a career of indiscriminate change, on which they did not wish voluntarily to enter.

The public agitation which had been created and fostered in the great mass of the people, while urging on the Reform Bill, had produced extravagant expectations, that the meeting of a reformed parliament would necessarily be followed by the redress of every thing evil—that all taxes complained of would forthwith disappear—that the corn-laws would fall to make cheap bread—that the wages of labour would be increased, while the price of all things necessary to the support, or comfortable enjoyment of life, would be reduced.

The Parliament about which so much expectation had been raised, was opened by commission on the 29th of January, 1833, when the election of the Speaker having taken place, the King's speech and the usual address to his Majesty came under the consideration of the house. To the one which immediately emanated from the ministers, a violent opposition was raised by a many of the more Radical members, which terminated with Mr. Cobbett's first effort in Parliament. On the bringing up of the report, he moved that the whole of the address should be rejected, and that another which he proposed, to the following effect, should be adopted: "assuring his Majesty that the House of Commons would direct its most serious attention to the papers

which his Majesty had directed to be laid on the table of the house relating to Portugal and Holland, and would anxiously consider the questions relating to the charters of the Bank of England and the East India Company; thanking his Majesty for having suggested a very great alteration with respect to the temporalities of the church, and assuring his Majesty that the house would enter into the examination of that subject without passion or prejudice; thanking his Majesty for having directed the estimates to be prepared with all due economy, and expressing regret that his Majesty had not been advised to suggest the propriety of lessening the burdens of the suffering community, and assuring him that the house would investigate the causes of distress, and institute measures to produce effectual and permanent relief; informing his Majesty, that the house was ready to adopt every constitutional mode of controlling and punishing the disturbers of the public peace in Ireland, and of strengthening those ties which connected the two countries; deeming that their separation would be fraught with destruction to the peace and welfare of his Majesty's dominions, and assuring his Majesty that the house was determined to go into a full consideration of the manifold grievances under which the Irish people laboured."

This amended address was of course not approved of by ministers, but being pressed to a division, there were 23 ayes, and 323 noes—thus rejecting Mr. Cobbett's address by a majority of 300.

Thus defeated in the outset of his parliamentary career, Mr. Cobbett only resolved the more vehemently to urge a variety of motions, which, had they been successful, would have tended greatly towards the extended freedom and happiness of the people. As it was, however, he was obliged to content himself with merely bringing them forward, with the certainty of seeing them rejected by large majorities of that house which had so lately been *reformed*. But even under all these disadvantages, Mr. Cobbett's consistency and manliness of purpose was distinctly seen by those who were not blinded by prejudice against a man who thus dared to stand alone in a virtuous cause.

Whenever members, to whatever party they might belong, brought forward measures that they considered would be beneficial to the great mass of the people, William Cobbett's name was always to be found among their most ardent supporters. For the Whigs we know he had no great partiality, and towards the Tories he entertained a feeling of the most sovereign contempt. At the head of his own small party, he stood boldly to resist their bad measures, and gallantly to support those which were calculated to increase the privileges of his oppressed countrymen. He loved the good cause he had so long cherished, and his watchful eye was ever directed towards that point from whence he hoped justice might at length be obtained for those whom he advocated.

On the 27th of June, 1833, Mr. Cobbett presented

a petition to the House of Commons, from a large number of the inhabitants of Camberwell and Walworth, being members of a political union in those villages. The petitioners complained that one William Popay, became a member of their union about fifteen months previously; that he attended their meetings, and frequently urged the members to adopt the most violent course against the existing government; that he dressed himself in plain clothes the more readily to deceive and lead them on to his infamous designs, and that they (the petitioners), were in the utmost peril of falling into the evils he had designed, when chance led to the discovery of his motives, and the dreadful fate he had prepared for them.

Having read the whole of the petition to the house, Mr. Cobbett proceeded to animadvert with the utmost severity on the baseness of the policeman, Popay, in the course he had pursued towards those unsuspecting victims of his evil designs. He even accused government with being privy to the whole undertaking, and concluded by praying that a committee should be appointed to investigate the whole affair. This, after some opposition, was finally acceded to, and after a vast mass of evidence had been heard, the committee declared that the charges brought against Popay had been clearly proved, and that they had detected many instances in which he had disguised himself in plain clothes for the purpose of misleading those parties whom he had joined and professed to agree with. The result

was, that Popay was discharged from the Police force, and there, for the present, the matter rested.

After this exposure of an infamous system of espionage, Mr. Cobbett brought forward many motions of the utmost importance with varied success. We have not, however, space even to enumerate them in this brief memoir of the illustrious deceased.

We are now brought to the period of Mr. Cobbett's last illness and death, which took place on Thursday, June 18th, at Normandy Farm, Surrey, whither he had retired from the fatigue of his parliamentary duties, in the hope of recovering and re-establishing his health, which had latterly become much impaired. This melancholy event is thus described by his son, James Paul:—

"A great inclination to inflammation of the throat had caused him annoyance from time to time, for several years, and, as he got older, it enfeebled him more. He was suffering from one of these attacks during the late spring, and it will be recollected, that when the Marquis of Chandos brought on his motion for the repeal of the malt-tax, my father attempted to speak, but could not make his voice audible beyond the few members who sat round him. He remained to vote on that motion, and increased his ailment; but, on the voting of supplies, on the nights of Friday, the 15th, and Monday, the 18th of May, he exerted himself so much, and sat so late, that he laid himself up. He determined, nevertheless, to attend the house again on

the evening of the Marquis of Chandos's motion on agricultural distress on the 25th of May; and the exertion of speaking and remaining late to vote on that occasion, were too much for one already severely unwell. He went down to his farm early on the morning after this last debate, and had resolved to rest himself thoroughly, and get rid of his hoarseness and inflammation. On Thursday night last, (June 11th,) he felt unusually well, and imprudently drank tea in the open air; but he went to bed apparently in better health. In the early part of the night, he was taken violently ill, and on Friday and Saturday was considered in a dangerous state by the medical attendant. On Sunday he revived again; and on Monday gave us hope that he would yet be well. He talked feebly, but in the most collected and sprightly manner, upon politics and farming; wished for 'four days rain' for the Cobbett corn and the root crops; and, on Wednesday, he could remain no longer shut up from the fields, but desired to be carried round the farm; which being done, he criticised the work that had been going on in his absence, and detected some little deviation from his orders, with all the quickness that was so remarkable in him. On Wednesday night, (June 17th,) he grew more and more feeble, and was evidently sinking; but he continued to answer with perfect clearness, every question that was put to him. In the last half hour his eyes became dim; and at ten minutes after one, P. M., he leaned back, closed them as if to sleep, and died without a gasp."

Mr. Cobbett's personal appearance was somewhat eccentric, but prepossessing. Hazlitt has described it so well that we shall quote him. "The only time I ever saw him," he remarks, "he seemed to me a very pleasant man—easy of access, affable, clear-headed, simple, and mild in his manner, deliberate and unruffled in his speech, though some of his expressions were not very qualified. His figure is tall and portly. He has a good sensible face—rather full, with little grey eyes, a hard, square forehead, a ruddy complexion, with hair grey or powdered, and had on a scarlet broad-cloth waistcoat, with the flaps of the pockets hanging down, as was the custom for gentlemen-farmers in the last century, or as we see it in the pictures of Members of Parliament in the reign of George I. I certainly did not think less favourably of him for seeing him." Mr. Cobbett's appearance underwent little change, at least little that was apparent to casual observers. Towards the close of his life he was less erect in his posture, and more feeble and slovenly in his gait; but he still retained the appearance of a hale and cheerful farmer. His costume, when he went to the House, was generally a suit of woollen clothes, of a very light mixture in colour, approaching to a dead white; and when he rose at the table to address the House, those who had not seen him previously, although they could not repress a smile at the singularity of his appearance, experienced an involuntary feeling of veneration for the person before them.

We should only be repeating what all persons, competent to judge, whatever their political opinions may be, concur in admitting, were we to say that Mr. Cobbett was one of the most extraordinary men of his day. Thrown upon the world at a very early age, without "book learning," without money, without a friend to direct his course, and habituated only to habits of rural industry, he at once procured for himself the confidence of all persons with whom he had intercourse, and gradually made his way from the stool in a "dungeon" called an attorney's office; or, as he himself said, at the close of the Oldham election, "from a plough-boy in a smock frock, and clogs well nailed," to the most honourable post which an English gentleman can fill—that of representing a populous and intelligent borough in the British Parliament.

As a writer, Mr. Cobbett was unrivalled. No man has written so much, and so well. To appropriate the language of a contemporary, his very antipodes in politics (the Standard,) "Mr. Cobbett was by far the first political writer of his age. In the attributes of a severely correct and unaffected, a clear and vigorous style, Mr. Cobbett was wholly without a rival, we venture to affirm, since the days of Swift; nor did this necessary staple of good writing want the ornaments of copious and striking illustration, or strong and well connected argument. From the immense magazine of Mr. Cobbett's voluminous compositions may, without difficulty, be collected samples of the highest eloquence

to be found in our language; while it would be nearly impossible for the most malignant jealousy to winnow from the mass a single dull or feeble article! And let it be remembered that nearly all was improvisation; the labour of a mind constantly employed in pouring forth its thoughts, without, during forty years, a day's, perhaps an hour's opportunity for preliminary rumination or subsequent review! This must have been a great mind; and, undoubtedly, Mr. Cobbett was a great man."—In stating a case, Mr. Cobbett was unequalled. He at once seized on the circumstances which favoured the views he wished to support, and seldom failed to produce the impression at which he aimed. What he could not effect by direct statement, he attained by inuendo. He was shrewd beyond most men, and he could detect and expose a subterfuge more readily than most men, Mr. Cobbett's mind, however, was not of great grasp or comprehensiveness. He was not capable of embracing and glancing at once into all the parts of a vast or complicated subject, or of generalising from special facts. Of an insolated case, however, he could make the most. His descriptions were striking and vivid, and his illustrations apt and forcible. He wrote upon all matters to be understood by all; and we do not recollect a single instance in which he has failed in his purpose. In no other writer can we find so much of bitterness, and abuse towards individuals, as in the writings of Mr. Cobbett. He was unforgiving of the offences of public men, and unchanging in his

enmity towards them. Let him but once detect a lurking disposition to political insincerity, or a covert predilection for anti-popular measures, and no subsequent abjuration of former admitted errors—no apparent ardour in prosecuting an opposite policy, could restore the offender to his favour or confidence. He ever afterwards looked upon him as hollow of heart, and vented his spleen in bitter, and not unfrequently, in the coarsest and foulest language. Let our readers take a specimen from the Register of Oct. 5th, 1833.—Those familiar with that work will recollect many passages equally bitter and powerful. The first article in this Register is an answer to an attack which appeared upon Mr. Cobbett in the Morning Chronicle of the 21st of the preceding September, and is addressed to the "Base Editor" of that paper, to whom the writer says, "I do not name you; I cannot legally name you; because according to the practice of all depredating reptiles, you keep out of sight; you hide your base carcase, while you poke out your poisoned stabber. I will not name your master, for the same reason that I lately withdrew an action against him, namely, because he once not only acted a just but a generous part towards me, and that, too, at a time when wretches like you thought I was down never to rise again. I must, for the present, at least, content myself with you, creeping, and venomous, and nameless reptile as you are." After inserting the article from the Chronicle, Mr. Cobbett, proceeds to comment

upon it, which he does in his most bitterly-powerful style. One of the accusations was, that he wished to prevent reform in the corporations. This he denies, and refers to what he had formerly urged in favour of such reform. Then comes the following touch, which no other writer could pen without exciting disgust. In Mr. Cobbett's writings it opens a source of positive enjoyment and mirth :—

" My readers will all remember this. I am sure I received applause enough for it at the time, from crowds of my fellow-citizens of London. This vagabond remembers it, too ; for he, as far as he dared, took part with the spoilers ; and yet, the tax-hunting wretch has now the audacity to represent me as an enemy to corporation reform.

' Ah !' the hungry vagabond will say, ' what do I care for this ?—what I mean by corporation reform is, a lazy life and a good parcel of public money for roaring Rushton and pis-aller Parkes, and plenty of guttling and guzzling for me along with them. We want to put an end to the turtle-eating at Guildhall, and to the money put under the plates after the dinners of the Companies ; but we want to guttle and guzzle ourselves, and to have money put under our plates.' This is the real language of the heart of this vagabond, and as I cannot prevent this new race of guttlers and guzzlers from being filled, I am pulling them out, at any rate, and letting people see them and their devourings. This is what has stirred the gall of this fellow, and of the crew that is urging him on."

Having disposed of his accusations, Mr. Cobbett thus addresses the editor of the Chronicle :—

" And now, wretched caitiff, hungry, gaunt, cadaverous looking devil, you who predict that the end of my life, political and natural, is approaching, what have you to say in your defence ? What reparation; no not reparation, for offering your worthless carcase to be flung on my land, to be used as manure for my cabbages, would not be reparation; but, what excuse have you for putting forth this string of calumnies and abuse ! I have attacked you ; that is to say, you mean, that I have knocked you away when you were coming at me with your nasty, rusty, and blunt old knife. It was you attacked me : I had not dragged you out by the ears : it was roaring Rushton, pis-aller Parkes, and Wood called John, that I had dragged out. I saw you, to be sure at your murderous work upon the poor old Chronicle: I would have gladly beaten you away ; but if her owner chose to have her murdered, it was no affair of mine. But, when you began raising your old jagged knife at me, it was high time to look about me, having no fancy for a cutting and slashing, more like a sawing, such as you had been performing so long upon my poor old acquaintance, the Chronicle. I know that in answer to these interrogatives of mine, you will come with a syllogism, thus :—

" 1. It is necessary that I should live, and, of course, necessary that I should eat.

" 2. In order to be able to eat, I must slander you.

"3. Therefore, it is necessary that I slander you.

"This is the way that a libellous poet reasoned with a French minister, whom he had lampooned. The minister answered him, as I might at once answer you, *by denying your major:* and I do deny that it is at all necessary that you should live. Necessary to whom and for what, I should be glad to know? Are you doing any good in the world? Are you of any use upon this earth? If you were to go under it to-morrow morning at day-light, would it be said by any human being, in the evening, any thing had been lost to the world, and particularly to the poor old Chronicle, in consequence of your demise? Do you convey any instruction, which can be of practical good to any human being? Do you till the land and cause any thing to grow? Do you assist to make the clothing or the houses, to cook the victuals, to turn the barley into drink; to make those articles of furniture which are for the use, ease, or pleasure of man? Do you curry the horses, or milk the cows (except as a rural policeman)? Do you polish the knives, or turn brown into black on the shoes? No: none of these; no earthly thing do you do, that tends at all to those purposes which conduce to the ease and happiness of a people. You are a mere consumer of food, clothing, houses, and other things which ought to be kept for the use of those who produce them, or who possess the lands, ships, or factories, or workshops, out of which they all spring. How, then, do you attempt to maintain the affirmative

of your major proposition; namely, that it is necessary that you should live? I am arguing, if the case were not so plain, at great disadvantage, because the proof ought to rest with you, not the disproof with me."

For power, raciness, and coarseness, this is unparalleled; and if the reader has any faculty for perceiving the ludicrous or the humorous, he cannot pursue it without a roar of laughter.

We believe that Mr. Cobbett's character, as to kindliness, disinterestedness, and generosity, has been ill understood by the public. It is true, that he has not laboured gratuitously: and why should he have done so? Has such been the custom with those who represent him as a selfish and mercenary man? It is mighty consistent in those who live upon the fruits of other people's industry—and such is the mode of living with many of his assailants—to hold him up as sordid and selfish, because he received what was deemed to be the marketable value of his labours. Why should the novel writer or the dramatist be free from reproach while he exacts the highest amount that he can procure for his productions; while Mr. Cobbett, whose genius and talents were second to those of no man, and whose labour and industry were prodigiously beyond those of all, is to be set down as destitute of all the higher and more generous qualities of mankind, for doing merely the same thing, in regard to production, not simply adapted to afford rational amusement, but to promote the liberty and enlarge the happiness of mankind?

FUNERAL OF THE LATE W. COBBETT, ESQ. M.P.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS BIRTH-PLACE AND FARM.

COBBETT's character in his own neighbourhood we endeavoured to ascertain from the poor around him, and "the best man that ever lived," was the weakest of the eulogiums universally bestowed upon him. To the labouring class he appears to have been a generous master; he would never suffer any man to work for him under half-a-crown a-day. A worthy farmer informed us "that Cobbett had spoiled every labourer in the place." He spoiled them, however, by kindness, not severity. It seems, that in the year 1776, he was a labourer and servant with one parson Forde, and this period of life is distinctly remembered by many in Farnham, and places adjacent, where some of the family still live.

Mr. Cobbett promised his servants that, on the 24th of June they should have a treat, and celebrate his birth in the house in which he was born, a large room for convivial purposes having been just built there. He expired six days before the projected festival.

THE GRAVE OF COBBETT.—It was Mr Cobbett's wish to be buried in the same grave as that in which his father and grandfather were deposited. Mr. Cobbett's friends were anxious that his remains should lie in the most conspicuous part of Farnham churchyard, so that a monument to his memory might meet the eye of the traveller; both these objects have been attained.

The grave of the grandfather is just opposite the great entrance to the church, and it is impossible to approach or leave that building without seeing the spot. The old tombstone of Mr. Cobbett's ancestor was cleared of its incumbrance of clay, but time has done its works upon it; we could, however, distinguish the words—

"In memory of George Cobbett, who died on the 13th of December, 1760, aged (we think) 59." The latter part of the inscription is nearly obliterated. When we arrived at the church on Friday afternoon the funeral service was performing over an inhabitant of Farnham, and the grave of Cobbett, which had been just dug, was then being bricked up, so as to form a sort of vault. Round the last chamber of this talented man were standing many old and poor inhabitants, each of whom had a particular recollection, or a hearsay, respecting him. From these, however, we gathered only that he was a subject of general interest and regard in Farnham and its vicinity. As a farmer he seems to have been deemed eccentric; it was his custom to grow wheat in strips, some four feet apart, and between each of these to plant cabbages, &c.

Mr. Newnham, and Mr. Gibson, of Farnham, were the medical attendants of Mr. Cobbett in his last illness. The immediate cause of death was water on the chest, unaccompanied by any other complaint. He suffered considerable pain with firmness and resignation, only discovering impatience at being, as he frequently said, "stived up in-doors." The arrangements of the

funeral were confided to Mr. George Johnson, undertaker, of Farnham, who politely obliged us with a few particulars. The body was little attenuated, and measured in the coffin six feet one inch. It was the desire of Mr. Cobbett's friends that the funeral should be conducted in the plainest manner, consistent with the character and station of the deceased, and that was also his own wish. The son of the landlord of the "Jolly Farmer," a young man whom Cobbett often noticed, having been both born in the same house, was apprenticed to a plumber, and has had the melancholy task of incasing the mortal remains of his late patron in lead.

Arrangements for the Funeral.—The rain poured down incessantly during Friday, and many who were expected to follow in the procession had not arrived; all that was known up to ten o'clock on that night was, that Mr. O'Connell had called in Bolt-court, and intimated his intention of following Cobbett to the grave. Mr. O'Connell's name, however, appearing in the evening papers, as chairman at a public meeting to be held on Saturday morning, threw considerable doubt upon the report. It was rumoured that if Mr. O'Connell did attend, he would speak over the grave. John Leach, Esq. late M.P. for the western division of Surrey. Mrs. Mellish, and Kean, bankers, of Godalming; and Mr. Cobbett's four sons, William, John, James, and Richard, were the only persons that it was positively known would attend.

A hearse and four, and two mourning coaches and four, were the only vehicles provided at Farnham. It was arranged that the other mourning coaches should join the procession as they fell into the line of road from London. The bell tolled out heavily at intervals. Mr. Alderman Scales and many personal friends of the deceased arrived a little before noon.

At about twelve o'clock the movement had been made at Normandy. At the White Post, about a quarter of a mile from the town, where the old Guildford road commences, Mr. Gibson and some other gentlemen of Farnham were collected, intending to fall into the procession on foot.

The coffin, which was excedingly heavy, was lowered slowly into its earthly home, and the burial service was read; during which we were surprised to observe Mr. O'Connell put on his cap, which, being of green, and having a gold band, was the more remarkable. During the service, Mr. John Cobbett with difficulty sustained himself on Captain Donnelly's arm. He wept bitterly, and was, not without some difficulty, removed from the grave. His brothers, James and Richard, who were also deeply affected, bore him into the vestry. As the mourners left the grave, the multitude rushed forward, so as to make it a task of difficulty to see the coffin. The inscription was simply—

"WILLIAM COBBETT,
M.P. FOR OLDHAM,
AGED 73,
DIED 18TH JUNE, 1835."

The mourners, with the exception of the Messrs. Cobbett, did not return to their carriages. Mr. O'Connell, and some portion of the party, walked to the Bush Inn, some of the others to Mr. Grove's, the Lion and Lamb. It was impossible to compute the number present with any degree of accuracy. Along the line of road persons had placed themselves in groups on all the elevations, and subsequently followed in the train. In the churchyard every flat monument held a little knot of persons, and the church was filled in body and galleries.

A great number of ladies were present, but the majority were of the other sex.

Previous to filling the grave a singular ceremony took place. Three flat stones were lowered upon the coffin (apparently wedges of slate or iron stone) so as to intervene between that and any coffin that may hereafter be placed upon it. Hundreds pressed forward for the last look; some picked up portions of the earth, or plucked a little of the herbage around the grave; and the coaches that arrived from Southampton, about four o'clock, stopped an extra quarter of an hour in changing, to enable the passengers to step to the churchyard, and see the last of William Cobbett. The funeral, and all bearing relation to it, was conducted in a style of simplicity and propriety, quite in keeping with him to whose honour it was performed.

Some scattered anecdotes of Cobbett's family, &c. we subjoin; it is roadside matter, but obtained generally

from those whom we have reason to believe knew him well, and who have shown an interest at his funeral highly honourable to him and to themselves. Many members of Mr. Cobbett's establishment were in attendance, among others Mr. Dean and Mr. Marshall (the William Marshall named in his letters from Ireland).

Mrs. Cobbett and her daughters were in the town of Farnham, and of the personal friends and admirers of the man we could furnish a long list.

Mr. Cobbett has left seven children; of the four sons, three are at the bar; the fourth, Richard, is articled to an attorney (Mr. Faithful). The daughters (Ann, Ellen, and Susan,) are unmarried, and we believe all his sons are so too.

Cobbett's grandfather lived next door to the Queen's Head, a little roadside inn, about a mile from Farnham, on the road to Waverley. A cousin of Mr. C.'s (Mr. Cæsar, a pastry-cook) lives in that town, and some other relatives are scattered about the adjacent places.

Mr. O'Connell, whilst standing beside the grave, was asked some questions, which we could not hear, by Mr. Harvey and Mr. Mellish; the honourable gentleman's reply, as we caught it, was to this effect:—"No; I would have spoken, but his family seem to think it had better not be done; and, of course, it rests with them —they know best." At an inn in the town Mr. Michael Scales had expressed his intention of following Mr. O'Connell's speech by a few remarks, and some persons

affirmed Mr. W. Harvey would pronounce an eulogium upon the deceased. These rumours proved to be wholly unfounded. After the burial service any oration would have been superfluous, and any eloquence, however sparkling, must fall flatly upon the ear which has drank in the words of that sublime composition.

The grave has now closed for ever on the mortal remains of William Cobbett, who, during, a long active, and laborious life, has engrossed, by the mere force of natural genius, unaided by scholastic education, a far larger share of public notice, than any man of past or present times. Lord North, whose estimate of mental power none will venture to dispute, described Cobbett as the greatest "political reasoner" he ever knew. He was so. It may, perhaps, fall to the lot of few to be so highly gifted, yet the same means for the cultivation of natural capacity are within the reach of those who are inclined to profit by them.

THE END.

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